



## Safeguarding Children Cloyne

CLOYNE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COMMITTEE



# THE DIOCESE OF CLOYNE

## Annual Report Of

# CLOYNE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 2014

### Commitment of a diocese

We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe, and caring environment for children in all aspects of Church life and activity - an environment in which children are cherished, valued as a gift from God, their right to dignity and bodily integrity upheld, their participation in all parish liturgies and in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development welcomed, encouraged and affirmed.

31st Dec 2014

## At a glance – the safeguarding children picture in the Catholic Diocese of Cloyne

The work of safeguarding children in the Catholic Diocese of Cloyne is comprehensive, well structured, planned, ongoing and facilitated by:

- **Policies** that are regularly revised and updated to ensure full compliance with the standards laid down by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI).
- **Codes of behaviour** with a declaration which all relevant Church personnel staff and volunteers must sign
- **Suitable structure and effective, verifiable mechanisms to implement the policies.** Headed by Bishop Ceanan the structure consists of, Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatory, Designated Liaison Person(s), Parish Priests, Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Safeguarding Committees and hundreds of trained personnel who operate at parish level.
- **Clear procedures, compliant with national guidelines and government legislation, for recognising, responding to and reporting concerns - including:**  
Definitions, signs and symptoms to facilitate recognising abuse. Comprehensive guidance about how to respond to someone who raises an allegation or concern with you – including a list of Do' & Don'ts.
- **Prevention strategies** –Including: Strict and mandatory recruitment and selection procedures including garda vetting, Code of behaviour for Church personnel, staff and volunteers, Code of behaviour for children, and a range of other preventative mechanisms, including guidance on running safe activities, on photography, internet and mobile phones and bullying.
- **Training and education facilitated by qualified trainers** is ongoing and is provided for each role for all Church personnel staff and volunteers under the guidance of the Diocesan Training Coordinator and under the direction of the National Board. Training for Parish Safeguarding Committees began in 2014.
- **Communication mechanisms** including written and electronic communication, parish information meetings, consultative meetings, annual newsletters and Biennial Safeguarding Children Conferences and a website specifically dedicated to safeguarding children – [www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie](http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie) . Electronic newsletters are planned for 2015.
- **Dedicated notice boards** in each church and sacristy containing the diocesan safeguarding children policy statement and contact details for those who wish to raise a safeguarding children concern or allegation and contact details of agencies that provide help and support.
- **Implementation and monitoring strategies** which include- annual plans of action, deadlines, annual parish audits, and annually issuing Certificates of Full Compliance if the parishes meet the standards of the audit and published Annual Reports.
- **Provision of services by CDSCC to priests and parishes** including advice, resources, training, garda vetting and various documents – Empowering Children to Speak out, Sample Parish Policy, Code of behaviour for Church personnel, staff and volunteers – basics for working with children.
- **A dedicated Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office** – specifically for the administrative and communication work associated with safeguarding children in the diocese.
- **A clear vision** – 100% implementation of 100% procedures and guidelines in 100% of parishes.



### **Members of CDSCC**

Una Relihan, Cobh; .Rosarie O’Riordan, Grenagh; Con Lynch, Macroom.(chairman); Canon Gerry Casey, Mallow; Denis Ring, Middleton; Fr. Eugene Baker, Shandrum; Mary Corbett, Kanturk.; Tom Murray, Fermoy.

### **Role of CDSCC**

The defined role of Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee (CDSCC) is outlined in the *Standards and Guidance Document for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church*:

- The provision of training.
- The safe recruitment of staff and volunteers within their service area.
- Creating, maintaining, and monitoring a safe environment for children in all areas of Church life and activity.
- Advising on the human resources required for implementing best safeguarding practice across services.

### **Approach and Methodology**

CDSCC fulfils its defined role through a methodology which inter alia includes:

- Decision making at well managed meetings informed by a detailed agenda.
- Allocation of manageable tasks to individual members.
- Allocation of the larger administrative tasks to the executive secretary in the safeguarding children office.
- A recap of decisions and outline of the tasks allotted is circulated to all members approx one week after the meeting.
- An agenda is issued approximately one week before each meeting, which includes a reporting from those to whom tasks were allotted,
- Individual reports of progress are made at the meeting and recorded.
- Decisions are usually based on consensus.
- Executing functions between meetings are the remit of the chairman and direction and advice are effected in this way.
- Administration and communication are effected via the dedicated safeguarding children office in Mallow.
- Some specific communication with priests is routed through the Cloyne Diocesan Centre in Cobh.
- Service is provided to priests, parish representatives and parishes generally via the safeguarding children office, training, publications, conferences, consultative and informational meetings.

### **Office hours and availability**

The Safeguarding Children Office (Tel 022/21009) is open Monday –Thursday from 9am – 3pm to provide advice, support and services to priests and parish safeguarding representatives and to progress the administrative work of the committee.

Help is available from CDSCC Chairman in the event of the office not being attended or outside of office hours).

### **Administration –office accommodation**

- (i) Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office is based in Mallow Community Youth Centre.
- (ii) The home office of the chairman is utilised for some work of the committee, principally for drafting of policies, agendas, recaps, documentation, progressing the work generally and for some correspondence with agencies and individuals involved with safeguarding children in the diocese and outside.

### **Administration – staff**

The office is managed by executive Secretary Rosarie O’Riordan the sole employee whose hours of employment are part time. Additional staff support is provided by occasional temporary workers employed by Mallow Community Youth Centre under government schemes.

We acknowledge the work of management and personnel from Mallow Community Youth Centre for the substantial and invaluable assistance given to the work of safeguarding children in the diocese during 2014.

### **Roles and responsibilities of committee members:**

Rosarie O’Riordan: Secretary, Qualified Trainer, Training Coordinator and Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatory for Church Personnel, Staff and Volunteers etc.

Fr. Eugene Baker: Qualified Trainer acted as editor of the Newsletter Safeguarding Children published in summer 2103.

Con Lynch: Qualified Trainer and Chairman with responsibility to perform executive functions in the interim between meetings ensuring that the work is continuous and ongoing, and for generally progressing and drafting policy and specific work assignments.

Individual members are responsible for carrying out specific designated assignments in the interim between meetings and for subsequently making progress reports to the committee. Assignments could involve research, examination of documents etc

As part of CDSCC’s training, education and communicating the Church’s safeguarding message, teams (usually consisting of two CDSCC members) visit parishes to make presentations at parish information meetings thus ensuring that all relevant Church personnel, staff and volunteers at parish level are provided with basic education and resources regarding the safeguarding children policy and guidelines of the diocese..

**Executive Summary – the work at a glance  
2014 Activities - briefly**

**Commitment of a diocese**

We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe, and caring environment for children in all aspects of Church life and activity - an environment in which children are cherished, valued as a gift from God, their right to dignity and bodily integrity upheld, their participation in all parish liturgies and in all activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development welcomed, encouraged and affirmed

**Full committee meetings:**

- Nine full committee meetings, involving morning and afternoon sessions, were held in Mallow Community Youth Centre and one meeting held in Cobh.
- The full committee met with Bishop Crean on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Other meetings involving members of CDSCC during 2014**

**Members attended:**

- Diocesan meetings with priests in The Midleton Park Hotel and in the Commons Inn in January 2014.
- Meeting with representatives from other dioceses in Mallow on 20th August.

**Meetings involving Chairman & Secretary**

- Met with Bishop Crean and other members of the diocesan safeguarding team in Cobh on two occasions during May.
- Assisted at press conference on 12th May in Midleton Park Hotel.
- Met designers at Woodland Print in on 30th May and 16th October.
- Met representative from Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin at Horse and Jockey on 8th July.
- Chairperson and executive secretary met with Bishop Crean in Cobh on 16th Dec.

**Diocesan Trainers attended:**

- Training in Maynooth on 21st February.
- Regional meetings of trainers in Limerick.

**Linkage** - Discussions with DLP Mr. Bill Meagher and with Bishop William formed part of the meetings outlined above or were held subsequent to them at the same venue.

**Events:**

Major events: Publication of the Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne and the subsequent press conference were major events. While it was predominantly positive and complementary to CDSCC, to its work and to individual

members thereof, the Review did make a number of recommendations and CDSCC has implemented them as appropriate.

### **Change and evolution**

Changes to Garda Vetting are assimilated as required by the NBSCCCI and by government legislation. The Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatory has attended training at the Garda Central Vetting Unit in Thurles and has been given a new title : *The Diocesan Garda Vetting Approved Liaison Person*.

### **Amending and updating of policies.**

Amending and updating of policies which involved the accommodation of the recommendations of the Review (May 2014), was made problematic by uncertainty regarding:

The commencement date for the *National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012*.

The enactment date for The **Children First Bill**, 2014, which will put elements of the Children First: National Guidance for Protection and Welfare of Children (2011) on a statutory basis.

The two new standards currently being developed by NBSCCCI.

The revised policy - Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (November 2014) is effectively an Interim policy and on the advice of NBSCCCI will be published on [www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie](http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie) but otherwise its publication will be limited.

### **Training**

- NBSCCCI approved training modules were delivered by qualified trainers to Parish Safeguarding Representatives, priests and members of diverse diocesan groups.
- Training at parish level: Power Point Presentations were made by CDSCC teams (which included a one trained trainer) in 16 parishes.
- Training for specific roles was provided by NBSCCCI.
- Training for The Diocesan Garda Vetting Approved Liaison Person was provided by the Garda Central Vetting Unit in Thurles.
- One additional trainer for the diocese was trained by NBSCCCI in Maynooth.

### **Implementation**

Implementation was promoted via:

- Activities of Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Safeguarding Committees.
- Discussions with various interests including - Bishop Crean, priests of the diocese, parish safeguarding representatives, parish safeguarding committees, group leaders, children, parents and other members of the diocesan safeguarding.
- Meetings (Jan 22/23) with priests of the diocese.

- All training sessions.
- Advice and support from Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office
- Circulation of parish audit form four months in advance of audit deadline.
- Additional measures of support and encouragement
- Ongoing correspondence to Parish Priests, Parish Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Safeguarding Committees.

### **Monitoring**

- Achieved principally via the 2014 Audit Process.
- Presentation of Certificates of Full Compliance to parishes that meet the standard set by the audit.
- Plans have been agreed for a verification process via visits to parishes by CDSCC audit teams in 2015.

### **Difficulties Encountered**

Difficulties in the form of inadequate responses by a very small minority of parish priests to CDSCC communication and requests were encountered.

The non-return of the 2013 audit in one instance and the failure of initiatives at various levels to achieve a satisfactory outcome this is a cause for concern.

### **Reports:**

- Annual Report 2013 (published in May 2014)
- Report on the 2013 Parish Audit (completed 7th May 2014).
- Report for Bishop Crean (5th March) on 22/23 January 2014 meetings with priests.
- Abbreviated Report (15th May) on 22/23 January meetings with priests - for circulation to priests.
- Report for Bishop Crean (21st Nov 2014) on CDSCC compliance with the recommendations of the Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne
- Annual Report 2014 (published 31st Dec. 2014)
- Report on 2014 Parish Audit (31st Dec 2014)

### **Advanced Planning for 2015**

- Verification process via visits to parishes by CDSCC audit teams in 2015.
- Continuation of Winning minds and hearts effort.
- The third Biennial Safeguarding Conference in October 2015.
- Training of Parish Safeguarding Committees.

### **Plans for 2014 included:**

- Implementation of Recommendations of Annual report 2013

- Routine provision of service and support for priests and parishes.
- Schedules for meetings.
- Programme development e.g. on bullying, social media and photography and mobile phones.
- Winning hearts and minds strategy including meetings with priests of diocese.
- Provision of informational reports.
- Developing links with other dioceses.
- Schedule for training parish representatives.
- Delivery of training for parish representatives, committee members and others
- Review of power point presentation for parish information meetings.
- Designing power point presentation for training parish safeguarding committees.
- Producing the Safeguarding Children Newsletter Issue 3.
- Promoting the establishment of parish safeguarding committees to assist parish priest and parish representatives.
- Publication and distribution of annual report.
- Linking with DLP and Deputy DLP
- Linking with various HSE personnel
- Distribution of Safeguarding Children Newsletter
- Parish information meetings: issuing invitations – scheduling and planning.
- Safeguarding Children Conference.
- Amending policy document , publishing it on the website and doing limited circulation of paper document.
- End of year review of plan.
- Annual Report 2014

### **Implementation of the recommendations of the Annual Report of 2013**

The recommendations outlined below were addressed in discussions between CDSCC and diocesan authorities, the priests of the diocese and in discussions with senior officials in NBSCCC. The outcomes were generally satisfactory and led to improvements in all areas although there was a lack of clarity about who was recognised by NBSCCC as the spokesperson for CDSCC in matters relating to the Review of the Safeguarding Practices in the Diocese of Cloyne (published May 2014).

(i) That CDSCC formulates a strategy aimed at ‘winning of hearts and minds, thus facilitating improved communication and cooperation among all Church personnel, staff and volunteers in the work of safeguarding children.

(ii) That in compliance with the recommendations of the meetings with priests of the deaneries, a safeguarding children committee, comprised of priest(s), parish safeguarding representatives and others, would be established in every parish to ensure ongoing upgrade and full implementation of diocesan policy and to alleviate the

workload that requirements of safeguarding children imposes on the parish priest/administrator.

(iii) That the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church keeps diocesan safeguarding children committees up to date with developments through establishing and communicating directly with them via a direct line of communication.

(iv) That every effort is made to ensure that all religious orders issue their priests with a celebret.

(v) That two appointees are appointed to the appeals panel as recommended in the new Garda Vetting and Appeals Procedures adopted during 2012.

(vi) That Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee is kept up to date and fully informed by the hierarchy regarding any changes in policy at diocesan or national level.

(vii) That discussions are held with relevant diocesan councils or personnel with a view to progressing and refining aspects of recruitment and selection policy, with specific reference to (i) garda vetting specific individuals (outside of those with substantial and unsupervised contact with children) (ii) Checking of references of individuals of good and long standing in the community – without comprising the integrity of the recruitment and selection policy.

#### **Other Issues addressed during 2014 included**

(i) The publication on 12th May 2014 of the Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) involved substantial work for the committee including:

- Preparation of responses.
- Attendance at press conference.
- Implementing its recommendations and reporting on that implementation.

(ii) Training staff and volunteers at parish level.

(iii) Training parish safeguarding committees.

## Detailed report on CDSCC's work on the seven standards

*CDSCC worked diligently during 2014 to encourage and promote full compliance in all parishes with the Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland published by the NBSCCC and implemented changes and revisions as recommended by the Review into Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne (May 2014). Our work with each of the seven standards is outlined in the following paragraphs:*

### Standard 1

#### **A written policy on keeping children safe**

The diocesan policy document currently in use is *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (November 2014)*. This is an updated version of the draft policy *Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Persons in the Diocese of Cloyne (Dec 2013)*. It will be not be published extensively in booklet format in accordance with the advice of the NBSCCCI who are planning to have an overarching policy for use in all dioceses ready during 2015.

Changes and new developments in legislation, procedures, guidances and terminology were accommodated within diocesan policy documents and these were notified and implemented as appropriate.

Changes were necessary to accommodate the recommendations of the Review into Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne carried out in December 2013 and published in May 2104. The format of the policy was changed to comprise:

Part 1 - The main policy document

Part 2 Policies based on single issues which may be subject to frequent change. An indices section follows Part 2.

Some policy areas were developed and expanded as indicated in the 2013 draft.

At the time of writing of this report, *the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012* although passed by the Dáil and Seanad and signed by President Higgins, has not been commenced. Due to the fact that *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (November 2014)* is strongly influenced by this 2012 Act, a qualification is included regarding the delayed legislation.

### Standard 2

#### **Procedures – how to respond to child protection allegations and suspicions**

Procedures for **responding to concerns or allegations of abuse** were progressed significantly and widely communicated using a variety of media e.g. our dedicated website, the Safeguarding Newsletter, and presentation of information sessions at parish level and to groups.

A major initiative which involved teams from CDSCC making power point presentations at parish information meetings was very successful although the hoped for acceptance of this initiative by all parishes was not forthcoming from a small minority of parishes.

Reporting procedures outlined in the policy document *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (Nov 2014)* include:

- **Information on the procedures** to be followed by a member of the Church or anyone else can use to express a concern about a child and the different options available for a member of the Church who wishes to express a concern about a child. This information is contained in text, in a flow chart, in an illustrative poster page and augmented by eleven pages of guidance regarding reporting procedures.
- **Procedures for Independent Reviews:** a complaints procedures - for individuals who are unhappy with the way in which their concerns have been dealt with.
- **Complaints procedures** -Resolving conflict.
- **Whistleblowing:** A new distinctive whistleblowing policy was produced and is enshrined in *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (November 2014)*. The whistleblowing policy is an organisational procedure that can be used by anyone involved to raise concerns about any practice or personnel that they feel is detrimental.

Just like the December 2010 policy document, the new policy document *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (November 2014)* contains extensive reporting procedures and additional information compliant with the new guidance, legislation and recommendations from the Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne:

- Key Reporting principles which inter alia state the responsibility to share child protection concerns with agencies responsible for assessing and investigating them.
- A Flow chart illustrating the various reporting options and pathways that a member of the Church, or anyone else can use to make a report regardless of who their concern is about.
- An illustrated chart outlining the reporting paths and options open to:
- All Church staff and volunteers who wish to raise a concern, in which any member of Church staff or volunteer is the person against whom the allegation is being made.
- All Church staff and volunteers and anyone else who wishes to raise a concern, in which any member of Church staff or volunteer is the person against whom the allegation is being made
- All Church staff and volunteers and anyone else who wishes to raise a concern, in which any member of Church staff or volunteer is not the person against whom the allegation is being made.

- A whistleblowing procedure is outlined
- Independent review procedures are outlined
- The obligation to report is clearly stated: “Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response.”
- The obligations to act to prevent endangerment to a child and the penalties for failure to do so under Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 are outlined in the policy.

### **Standard 3**

#### **Preventing harm to children**

This work continued to be promoted via parish information meetings. At these meetings, CDSCC members make a power point presentation and attendees participate in various activities based on hypothetical situations.

Dates for these meetings are agreed with the parish priest and guidance provided regarding who should be invited.

**Prevention Literature** such as the *Parish Safeguarding Children Policy Statement, Guidelines, Roles and Responsibilities Parish* (Dec 2010) and *The Code of Behaviour for Church Personnel, staff and volunteers – basics for working with children* as well as a particular emphasis on diocesan guidance on *Empowering Children to Speak Out* all contribute to the overall safeguarding tapestry. They are available on the dedicated website and form part of all presentations on safeguarding children issues. Collectively these documents cover the entire safeguarding spectrum but they reflect strong emphasis on the three R’s and on strategies for preventing harm to children. This prevention literature was updated in Nov/Dec 2014.

#### **Empowering children to speak out**

CDSCC published a specific information for children must be explained to them by groups leaders etc. This leaflet states:

At parish level, children should be made aware that:

- they have the right to be safe
- they can raise concerns with specific individuals within the parish church organisation.
- if they feel uncomfortable about raising concerns with the named individual(s) within the Church organisation, they should tell someone they can trust and keep telling them until they are listened to.
- they can contact the Diocesan Designated Officer, Gardaí, H.S.E. and that these contact details are on display
- there are contact details for other agencies that they can contact e.g. child safeguarding and children’s help-lines
- the codes of behaviour are on display

**Child Friendly Posters (A3)** - were designed, printed and circulated to parishes. It is a requirement that these are displayed and guidance is provided in this regard..

**Child Friendly Information Flyers (A 4):** These are designed in poster format and suitable for displaying by children on the backs of their bedroom doors or walls

### **Empowering children who are subject to aural, visual or literacy limitations**

Planning commenced during 2014 for production of a DVD for children who are subject to aural, visual or literacy limitations

Initial approaches have been made to a producer

Preliminary discussions took place with individuals from other dioceses with a view to a joint initiative to ensure consistency of approach and to minimise costs.

### **Garda Vetting**

#### **List of who should be garda vetted:**

In response to a request from the 22/23 January meetings with priests to provide a list of who should be garda vetted, CDSCC circulated the following to all parishes:

#### **List of who should be garda vetted in the Diocese of Cloyne.**

This list is provided for guidance within parishes only and should not be interpreted as definitive or excluding other individuals or categories from a requirement of garda vetting.

- Clergy, seminarians and religious who are available for ministry.
- Sacristans Parish safeguarding representatives. Members of the Parish Safeguarding Children Committee.
- Leaders of Church activities/groups that involve children: e.g. choir leaders, prayer groups and distinct apostolic groups such as The Legion of Mary, Pioneers etc
- All adult members of groups comprised of adults and children (under 18's) including choirs, prayer groups, and other such groups including distinct apostolic groups such as The Legion of Mary, Pioneers etc
- All church personnel/ staff and volunteers who work with children in the You Shall Be My Witnesses Programme.
- Ministers of the Eucharist and/or others who minister to the sick or to vulnerable persons at venues outside of the church.
- Full-time or part-time staff and/or volunteers/voluntary lay faithful in parishes with direct access to children or vulnerable persons

Additional criteria which were added in October 2013 and deemed necessary in the light of experiences, are included in the list outlined above.

### **Re-vetting after five years**

The re-vetting of Church personnel, staff and volunteers in accordance with the five year re-vetting policy, was progressed.

**Training in new garda vetting legislation and requirements**

The Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatory attended training in Templemore regarding vetting procedures

**Heavy workload**

The additional criteria coupled with re-vetting and attendance at training courses contributed to a heavy workload for the Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatory.

**Application forms and checking references:** The effort to ensure that all parishes are compliant in this regard was ongoing and was promoted at training courses, parish information meetings etc..

**Data base:** The garda vetting data base relating to Church personnel, staff and volunteers is updated to facilitate easy management of processing the Garda vetting applications and to generally facilitate adherence by the diocese to its recruitment and selection policy and guidance. The data base is established and maintained in accordance with the requirement of data protection legislation.

The diocese will have to consider whether to adopt e-vetting in 2015. This will have implications for the Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatories who manage the process under the CPSMA umbrella for school based personnel.

**Standard 4**

Training was progressed in a planned way by the Training Coordinator and delivered by fully trained trainers approved by the NBSCCC.

Teams from CDSCC delivered training to members of apostolic groups. CDSCC were asked by NBSCCCI to train groups from the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association

**One day NBSCCCI approved courses** were provided principally for parish safeguarding representatives and some priests. Certificates are awarded to those who completed the training.

**Training at parish level:**

**16** Training sessions for Church personnel, staff and volunteers at parish level were provided by CDSCC personnel via parish information meetings resulting in **537** individuals being trained under this form of training.

One training sessions delivered to the Pioneer Total Abstinence Group. **9** were trained in this module of training which is based on the power point presentation for parish information sessions.

**614** individuals in total were trained to a level appropriate to their role in 2014.

**Training of Church personnel, staff/volunteers who have specific roles** e.g. Designated Liaison Person(s) etc attend at training organised by of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) i.e. the body within whose remit this aspect of training lies.

**The recommendation of the Review into Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne** to arrange a training needs and skills analysis on which a training plan would be developed has been enshrined in the diocesan policy document *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (Nov 2014)*

#### **Difficulties Encountered in organising training**

Difficulties in the form of inadequate responses by a very small minority of parishes to CDSCC communication regarding training debilitated and frustrated the safeguarding children work across a number of Standards of the NBSCCCI.

#### **Standard 5**

##### **Communicating the Church's safeguarding message**

CDSCC regards communicating the Church's safeguarding message as a matter of great importance. Great effort was expended in **communicating the Church's safeguarding message** by CDSCC personnel through parish information meetings with the help and support of priests and parish safeguarding representatives and through the use of various media including the dedicated website [www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie](http://www.safeguardingchildrenclayne.ie) the Safeguarding Children Newsletter, parish bulletins and the diocesan pastoral office. radio

**Cohesion and linkage** with other agencies involved in safeguarding children was promoted through meetings with Bishop Crean, with members of the diocesan safeguarding team and with representatives from other dioceses.

**Two significant items of information for children** were produced and circulated .

An A3 size Child Friendly Poster with contact details for display at parish venues.

An A4 size information flyer also in poster format with useful information for children.

**A specific Communications Policy which commits the diocese to openness and transparency** was produced and enshrined into the diocesan policy document *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (Nov 2014)*

**Improving communication** with parish safeguarding representatives and parish safeguarding committees is ongoing.

Members of CDSCC also attended meetings on 22/23 Jan 2014 to which the priests of the diocese were invited in an effort to promote consultation and understanding.

**Quarterly bulletin:** Quarterly electronic bulletin are planned and the first is scheduled for March 2015

**Communication issues:** As was the case during 2013, some frustration was experienced by CDSCC in aspects of communication at various levels. In particular, the experience of CDSCC in trying to communicate with a very small minority of parishes was unsatisfactory.

Additionally, there was a lack of clarity about who was recognised by NBSCCCI as spokesperson for CDSCC in matters relating to the Review of Safeguarding Practices in the Diocese of Cloyne (published May 2014).

## **Standard 6**

### **Access to advice and support**

Access to advice and support is facilitated through the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office through an out of hours contact number and through the Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person. Additionally a lot of effort has been expended on assisting priests and parish representatives generally.

**At diocesan level two additional support people** - one a man and one a woman were appointed to provide support to the victims. These appointments are in accordance with the recommendations of the Review into Safeguarding Practice in the Diocese of Cloyne. This recommendation has been enshrined in the diocesan policy document Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (Nov 2014).

**Procedures for dealing with individuals who pose a risk to children** are included in diocesan policy document Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (Nov 2014). New procedures which are the subject of a working group at NBSCCCI will be included when they become available.

### **Support and service provision**

The office provides advice, support and services to priests and parish safeguarding representatives and progresses the administrative work of CDSCC.

Help is available from CDSCC Chairman in the event of the office not being attended or outside of office hours).

Significant support is provided to CDSCC by management and personnel at Mallow Community Youth Centre.

See **Appendix 1** for comprehensive list of supports and services provided by CDSCC to diocese and parish.

**Standard 7****Implementation and monitoring**

Certificates of Full Compliance were issued to 45 of the 46 parishes on the basis of the 2013 parish audit.

The attitude of the parish priest, who has overall responsibility for safeguarding children in the parish, his willingness to constructively involve the parish safeguarding representatives and his attitude to implementation of the policies of NBSCCCI and of the Diocese of Cloyne is central to the degree of best practice achieved in the parish.

CDSCC devoted much time, effort aimed at achieving full implementation in all forty six parishes. Parish safeguarding representatives and parish safeguarding committees are there to help the P.P.

**Parish Safeguarding Committees** are intended to alleviate the safeguarding workload of the parish priest and in many instances are enormously helpful and actively helping him with the safeguarding children work.

**Winning hearts and minds** Members of CDSCC also attended meetings in on 22/23 Jan 2014 to which the priests of the diocese were invited. Fostering understanding and winning hearts and minds featured in these discussions.

**Monitoring: An Annual Parish Audit** is required by the Diocese of Cloyne and by NBSCCCI to whom the audit report and analysis must be returned each year.

The diocese sets a target of full implementation i.e. 100% implementation of 100% guidelines in 100% of parishes.

**Statistical information to inform training and garda vetting plans for the following year:** The audit document is based on the template supplied by the National Office for Safeguarding Children but it includes some additional items to help gather statistical information that will assist the formulation of training plans and garda vetting plans for the following year.

**A Certificate of Full Compliance** is issued to each parish once 100% implementation has been confirmed via the audit. .

**In an effort to help parishes comply with the 30th Nov. deadline:**

The audits were sent to them in July along with a letter of advice.

A reminder letter was sent in early November to each parish priest and to local parish safeguarding personnel with advice and offers of help.

**Difficulties encountered**

Issues relating to cooperation and inadequate response to communications from CDSCC personnel was problematic. CDSCC implemented a variety of initiatives to help - including visits by individual CDSCC members to parish that had asked for help.

Enlisting the assistance of parish safeguarding representatives.

Involvement of the diocesan authorities.

Parish visitation by a two member CDSCC audit team. (This initiatives will be continued and significantly expanded in 2015).

**Conclusions**

- Throughout 2014, the work of "creating a safe environment for children in all aspects of Church life and activity" was carried out methodically and with attention to detail, utilising well designed structures combined with appropriate training and education of Church personnel, staff and volunteers at all levels in diocese and parish and consistent efforts to communicate widely the Church's safeguarding message.
- The great volume of work outlined in this report reflects great commitment and voluntary effort by a great many people.
- Planned programmes aimed at implementing the seven standards of the S&G document were applied.
- Almost all parishes have provided training for staff and volunteers via power point presentations by CDSCC teams at information meetings in their parishes and hundreds of additional individuals received this training..
- Forty five parishes returned the 2013 audits, and while this was an excellent outcome, it was not the hoped for 100% outcome.
- Difficulties in the form of inadequate responses by a very small minority of parishes to CDSCC communication, will require further action from CDSCC and from diocesan authorities in 2015 (See recommendations).
- Plans by NBSCCCI to provide an overarching policy document for use in all dioceses will mean that *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne (November 2014)* may be the last of its sort to be produced locally by CDSCC.
- Work still remains to be done in the area of winning hearts and minds but significant improvement has been evident throughout the diocese, although significant progress has been made in this area..
- Preliminary planning and preparation of initiatives for 2015 has been done.

**Recommendations**

1. That the initiatives aimed at winning hearts and minds planned for early 2015 would be implemented including

- A Safeguarding Weekend.
- A letter from Bishop Crean to all Church personnel, staff and volunteers to encourage and improve linkage and cohesion.

2. That CDSCC audit teams would visit a number of parishes as part of an initiative to help, to promote understanding, improve communication and to review safeguarding practice at parish level.

3. Bearing in mind that ensuring the safety of children is of paramount importance and conscious of the obligation to act to uphold that principle, it is essential that the bishop and CDSCC (and the Episcopal conference if appropriate), provide appropriate mechanisms for dealing with a circumstances in which a parish does not comply with the requirement(s) of diocesan and/or national policy.

Discussions in this regard could focus on identifying what the problems are and how an active parish safeguarding committee and other suitably qualified retired parishioners might assist.

### **Acknowledgements**

As chairman, I want to acknowledge the loyalty and unfailing support of the members of the committee. They are faithful attendees at the meetings and faithfully fulfil assigned duties during the interim between meetings including travelling to parishes to communicate the Church's safeguarding message.

I particularly want to acknowledge the commitment, unfailing support and enormous work output of Rosarie O'Riordan - CDSCC Executive Secretary and Diocesan Garda Vetting Signatory.

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Those priests throughout the diocese who worked conscientiously to ensure that all guidelines and procedures of diocesan safeguarding children policy were fully implemented in their respective parishes.

Parish safeguarding children representatives who helped to make their parishes fully compliant.

Parish Safeguarding Committees, whose efforts contributed so much to ensure full compliance with all procedures, who helped to reduce the safeguarding workload of the parish priest and who are expanding the safeguarding work.

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Ms. Teresa Devlin CEO of the National Board Mr. Ian Elliott.

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The volunteers in many parishes who organised rooms and refreshments at parish information meetings.

Those priests who helped by their prayers, words of encouragement, understanding and support.

## Appendix 1

### **List of services and supports provided by CDSCC to priests and parishes**

Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee has worked extremely hard to serve the diocese, and to provide service and support to priests and parish representatives. The list outlined below reflects many of the services and supports which CDSCC has provided to priests and parishes in 2013 and preceding years.

- Designing, publishing and circulating an appropriate policy document – Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne.
- CDSCC individuals visited parishes (in some instances physically pinned up the mandatory notices in churches and sacristies.
- Ensuring that all priests available for ministry were trained in the Keeping Safe Programme.
- Ensuring that all priests available for ministry were garda vetted.
- Ensuring that all 46 parishes had trained parish safeguarding representatives and trained priests – 86 trained in NBSCCCI approved training course.
- Ensuring that garda vetting was applied to all relevant Church personnel, staff and volunteers.
- Providing dedicated notice boards at reduced price for parishes that wished to avail of this help.

- Designing and circulating a range of supporting documentation and guidelines to parishes including sample parish policy documents, code of behaviour for staff and volunteers, empowering children to speak out etc.
- Provision of advice and support for priests, parish representatives and Church personnel – even outside of office hours.
- Upgrading guidelines in accordance with new safeguarding developments.
- Defending the safeguarding children achievements of the diocese against inaccurate and adverse assessments
- Designing Certificates of Full Compliance to acknowledge the full implementation in some parishes, and to encourage those who were lagging behind.
- Direct help and advice to priests and answers to questions.
- Delivery of official forms to each parish.
- Establishment of dedicated website [www.safeguardingchildrencloyne.ie](http://www.safeguardingchildrencloyne.ie) which inter alia provides downloadable assistance and documentation to priests and parishes.
- Availability of Cloyne diocesan safeguarding children office to facilitate priests and parish representatives in need of advice.
- Assisting priests by designing and presenting power points at meetings in each of the five deaneries.
- Providing practical support by designing and presenting power point presentations at specially convened parish information meeting.
- Visiting parishes to make power point presentation
- Drafted the new Garda Vetting Procedures and Appeals Process and made it available to priests and parishes.
- Ongoing availability to give advice or answer questions on policy issues – even outside of office hours.
- Design and delivery of a Transfer Manual to help facilitate the transition for newly appointed parish priests.
- Provision of training to groups such as Bethany Bereavement Groups, Lourdes Group.

**Con Lynch (Chairman) 31/12/2014**

