



**Review of Safeguarding Practice
in the Religious Order of**

**St Augustine
The Augustinians (OSA)**

undertaken by

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

Date: December 2014

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Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Irish Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union, to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland. The purpose of the review is to confirm that current safeguarding practice complies with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009, and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each Church authority is to be reviewed through an examination of case records and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to a diocese or other authority.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Religious Order of St Augustine - The Augustinians (OSA)* undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. It is based upon the case material made available to us by the Prior Provincial, along with interviews with selected key personnel who contribute to safeguarding within the Order. The NBSCCCI believes that all relevant documentation for these cases was passed to the reviewers, and the Prior Provincial has confirmed this.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group before being submitted to the Prior Provincial, along with any recommendations arising from the findings.

Introduction

The Order of St Augustine, also known as the Augustinians, was formally established by Pope Innocent IV in Italy in the thirteenth century. It is one of four mendicant orders in the Catholic Church, and has an extensive international presence, doing much historically to extend the influence of the Church, to propagate the Roman Catholic faith and to advance learning. The General Curia of the Order is based in Rome, and there are 50 administrations globally which are governed by the Prior General. The key elements of the Augustinian tradition are described (www.augustinians.ie and www.augustinians.net) as those of a strong sense of Christian community; the restless search for God, for his love and truth; the invitation to form communities and to embody Gospel ideals; to offer companionship to men and women making their journey to the heart; and to serve the local church, adapting ministry to the needs of the time. Augustinian Friars (both priests and brothers) work in a variety of apostolates which include parishes, schools, universities, foreign missions, retreats, hospitals, youth apostolate, and care of the elderly.

The first Augustinians arrived in Ireland from England and Wales in 1259, establishing a Friary in 1282. By 1450 there were 20 Augustinian houses in Ireland. The activities of the Order were suppressed during the Reformation, but the houses were re-established by 1620. In 1830 the Order founded schools in Wexford and Waterford and began to set-up missions in England, Scotland, India and America. It established its first mission in Africa in 1938. The Augustinians took on the administration of parishes in Meath St and Ballyboden in Dublin, and in Galway in 1973-74, and later in Finglas, Dublin in 1986. (www.augustinians.ie).

The Augustinian Order in Ireland today has a total of 98 members, located in 9 communities (spanning 15 geographical areas), of whom some 81 are in Ireland. Each community is managed by a Prior and has a degree of functional independence. Governance and overall administration of the Irish Province is undertaken by the Prior Provincial, supported by a 6 person Provincial Council. The Prior Provincial has a 4 year term of office, with the possibility of re-election for a second term. The current Prior Provincial and his Council assumed office in July 2013. The average age of men in the Order is 72.4 years. The Order estimates that about 75 of its members have access to children and young people. The level of this access is low and mainly concerns parish ministry: altar servers, visiting families in their homes and contact with children in school settings. In Dublin there are parishes in Meath St, Ballyboden and Finglas, a public Church in Thomas St, the Orlagh Retreat Centre in Old Court Road and a care facility for elderly Friars in Ballyboden. Orlagh is a retreat centre whose work is largely with parish teams. The Augustinians no longer conduct residential retreat programmes. There is a parish in St Augustine St, Galway. There are also public Churches in Limerick, Cork, New Ross, Grantstown, Drogheda, Dungarvan, and Fethard. Public Church ministry is largely sacramental provision. In some instances there are outreach programmes (e.g. Cork – Polish Community; Drogheda – Vocations; Limerick – Immigrants etc.). Other Churches may facilitate small group activities (such as scripture groups, reflection and prayer groups), and some have religious goods shops. The Augustinians retain overall management responsibility for their two schools – St Augustine’s College, Dungarvan and Good Counsel College, New Ross. These were formerly boarding schools (this function has ceased since the 1990s), and are now administered by Boards of Management and lay principals. Augustinian Friars are involved in Pastoral Care (Chaplaincy)

and as volunteers in these schools. The Order has chaplaincy positions in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda and in St. Patrick's (Mental Health Services) in Dublin, and in Good Counsel Centre, Ballyboden, Dublin. Some Friars are involved in lecturing, retreats and scripture classes etc.

In terms of its international structure, each Province (or other administrative area) within the Order is responsible for the management and governance of the Friars who have been 'ascribed' or allocated to it. There are 3 Friars from Ireland currently working in the Anglo-Scottish Province, 3 working in the Californian Province and 5 in the Nigerian Province (1 of whom is based in Kenya). It is noted, however, that 3 Friars based in Ecuador and 4 based in the Order's house in Rome (who are involved in teaching and study), belong to the Irish Province.

The review of the Order of St Augustine was carried out on the 24th and 25 September 2014. Reviewers from the NBSCCCI were given access to the Order's safeguarding data base and read a number of individual case files. They reviewed the Order's child safeguarding policy (2009) and other documentation (minutes of meetings, draft policies, communications material etc.) made available to them. Interviews were held with a range of people involved in the safeguarding structure (including the Prior Provincial, the Designated Safeguarding Officer, members of the Provincial Council, community safeguarding representatives, members of the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel, and care and safety management plan supervisors). The reviewers have also contacted representatives from An Garda Síochána and TUSLA to discuss the quality of communication relating to the safeguarding of children.

The child safeguarding policy of the Irish Province of the Order of St Augustine is entitled *Safeguarding Policy – Towards Children and Vulnerable Adults* and is dated 2009. It is currently under revision. Prior to 2013 the function of the Designated Safeguarding Person was undertaken by a member of the Order, and the Order is part of a grouping of religious orders which seeks to develop a collaborative resource for advice and policy development in child safeguarding. The Augustinians have also put in place their own advisory and development arrangements. The Order appointed a lay Designated Safeguarding Person in August 2013, who currently works for 3 days each week to support the Prior Provincial and the Provincial Council. The Designated Safeguarding Person relates to the local Prior who is the lead safeguarding representative in each of the 9 communities across 15 locations; he reports to the Prior Provincial and advises the internal Case Management & Safeguarding Advisory Panel which, in turn, makes recommendations to the Provincial Council in respect of child safeguarding matters. The management of any new child abuse allegations against Augustinian Friars in the 4 parishes would, in the first instance, be conducted in line with the procedures set out in the appropriate diocesan safeguarding policy (in the Archdiocese of Dublin or in Diocese of Galway). The initial response in relation to any of the public churches or the retreat centre which are administered directly by the Order of St Augustine would be conducted under the terms of the Augustinian policy. The 2 schools which are still controlled by the Order have separate child safeguarding policies, as required by the Department of Education and Skills.

In summary this report has concluded that the Order of St Augustine is now compliant in relation to a majority of the 47 safeguarding criteria applied by the NBSCCCI, but that there is a significant number of areas where further development is necessary. There are two key

dimensions to safeguarding children which require parallel approaches – those of effective case management and of effective prevention (including areas such as training, awareness raising, vetting, communication etc.). There are several problematic aspects to the performance of the Order prior to 2013, including poor maintenance of case records and case management, an inconsistent record of reporting to the statutory agencies, and very little recorded emphasis on the preventative agenda. The reviewers were informed that training and development work was undertaken between 2005 – 2007, and note that the 2009 safeguarding policy addressed a number of the key areas set out in the *NBSCCCI Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2009*. However any momentum established by these actions was not subsequently sustained. The reviewers have concluded that safeguarding development currently falls short of the level that they would expect to have been achieved by 2014. The reviewers have seen and been re-assured by evidence of commendable vision, commitment and action by the current Prior Provincial and the Designated Safeguarding Person to make progress, but their work is still at a relatively early stage.

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: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. This guidance was launched in February 2009 and was endorsed and adopted by all the Church authorities that minister on the island of Ireland, including the Augustinians. The seven Standards are:

Standard 1 A written policy on keeping children safe

Standard 2 Procedures – how to respond to allegations and suspicions in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

Standard 3 Preventing harm to children:

- recruitment and vetting
- running safe activities for children
- codes of behaviour

Standard 4 Training and education

Standard 5 Communicating the Church's safeguarding message:

- to children
- to parents and adults
- to other organisations

Standard 6 Access to advice and support

Standard 7 Implementing and monitoring the standards

Each standard contains a list of criteria, which are indicators that help decide whether this standard has been met. The criteria give details of the steps that a Church organisation, diocese or religious order - needs to take to meet the standard and ways of providing evidence that the standard has been met.

Standard 1

A written policy on keeping children safe

Each child should be cherished and affirmed as a gift from God with an inherent right to dignity of life and bodily integrity, which shall be respected, nurtured and protected by all.

Compliance with Standard 1 is only fully achieved when an Order meets the requirements of all nine criteria against which the standard is measured.

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
1.1	The Church organisation has a child protection policy that is written in a clear and easily understandable way.	Met Fully
1.2	The policy is approved and signed by the relevant leadership body of the Church organisation (e.g. the Bishop of the diocese or provincial of a religious congregation).	Met Partially
1.3	The policy states that all Church personnel are required to comply with it.	Met Fully
1.4	The policy is reviewed at regular intervals no more than three years apart and is adapted whenever there are significant changes in the organisation or legislation.	Not met
1.5	The policy addresses child protection in the different aspects of Church work e.g. within a church building, community work, pilgrimages, trips and holidays.	Met Partially
1.6	The policy states how those individuals who pose a risk to children are managed.	Not met
1.7	The policy clearly describes the Church's understanding and definitions of abuse.	Met Fully
1.8	The policy states that all current child protection concerns must be fully reported to the civil authorities without delay.	Met Fully
1.9	The policy should be created at diocese or congregational level. If a separate policy document at parish or other level is necessary this should be consistent with the diocesan or congregational policy and approved by the relevant diocesan or congregational authority before distribution.	Met Fully

As already indicated, the child safeguarding policy of the Irish Province of the Order of St Augustine is entitled *Safeguarding Policy – Towards Children and Vulnerable Adults (2009)*. The policy states on the covering page that all children have a fundamental right to be respected,

nourished, cared for and protected. This right is embedded in Gospel values, in international law and in domestic law. The policy sets out a code of behaviour, a series of underlying principles and addresses a number of key safeguarding themes. It states (P9) that the guidelines apply to all Augustinians, staff and volunteers. It also states (P17) that *'all adults working in parish/school/church ministry should be made aware of and commit to the Augustinian Child Protection Policy and Code of Good Practice'*. It is written clearly and presented in an accessible format. The policy was adopted at the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Irish Province, meeting on 21-26 June 2009, where it was formally signed-off by the vast majority of the delegates. The reviewers consider that Criterion 1.1 is fully met. The policy was approved, signed and dated by the Prior Provincial and Provincial Council at the Chapter. However, the policy document does not contain a signed/dated mandate from the Prior Provincial and the Provincial Council, and Criterion 1.2 is therefore deemed as partially met. Whilst it is accepted that Criterion 1.3 is addressed, the reviewers recommend that the requirement for all members of the Order to implement the policy is more explicitly stated at an earlier stage in the document.

The reviewers have noted that considerable work has already been undertaken to revise the 2009 policy, which was due for review in 2012. Criterion 1.4 has not therefore been met. The revision is still in draft form, and will be able to address recommendations from this report. The sections on *'Responding to a Disclosure'* and on *'Case Management Recording Policy'* were revised and issued (on an interim basis) by the Prior Provincial in the course of 2014. It is noted that the NBSCCCI plans to revise the safeguarding standards and develop a common Church safeguarding policy in 2015, and that the Augustinian revision will therefore be an interim document.

In relation to Criterion 1.5 which is assessed as partially met, the reviewers consider that it is important for the Order to address the child safeguarding process governing those priests who are in transit from other provinces or administrative areas to the Irish Province. The reviewers were informed that priests in transit already require a celebret or letter of good standing. This good practice should be written into the safeguarding policy.

Criterion 1.6 requires that the child safeguarding policy should state the internal processes which religious orders will implement in response to allegations of child abuse against their members. Whilst individual case files contain evidence of the application of canonical procedures, this is not referenced in the 2009 policy. Criterion 1.6 is therefore assessed as not met.

The policy contains information about definitions of abuse, and states that all allegations must be reported to the civil authorities without delay, meeting Criteria 1.7 and 1.8 fully. The policy has been created at congregational level, as noted above, and formally signed off. Criterion 1.9 is assessed as fully met.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the 2009 policy revision is completed without delay (Criterion 1.4). This should be done as an interim measure, pending the revision of NBSCCCI's standards and the development of a common Church Safeguarding policy in 2015.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the revised policy contains his clear signed endorsement and that of the Provincial Council, (Criterion 1.2) and that it must be implemented by all members of the Order.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the requirement for priests in transit from other Provinces or administrative areas to evidence celebretis is written into the policy in order to fully meet Criterion 1.5.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the internal process, including the application of canonical procedures, which will be applied to members in respect of whom child abuse allegations are made, are fully described in the policy (Criterion 1.6).

Standard 2

Management of allegations

Children have a right to be listened to and heard: Church organisations must respond effectively and ensure any allegations and suspicions of abuse are reported both within the Church and to civil authorities.

Compliance with Standard 2 is only fully achieved when the Augustinians meet the requirements of all seven criteria against which the standard is measured.

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
2.1	There are clear child protection procedures in all Church organisations that provide step-by-step guidance on what action to take if there are allegations or suspicions of abuse of a child (historic or current).	Met fully
2.2	The child protection procedures are consistent with legislation on child welfare civil guidance for child protection and written in a clear, easily understandable way.	Met fully
2.3	There is a designated officer or officer(s) with a clearly defined role and responsibilities for safeguarding children at diocesan or congregational level.	Met fully
2.4	There is a process for recording incidents, allegations and suspicions and referrals. These will be stored securely, so that confidential information is protected and complies with relevant legislation.	Met fully
2.5	There is a process for dealing with complaints made by adults and children about unacceptable behaviour towards children, with clear timescales for resolving the complaint.	Met partially
2.6	There is guidance on confidentiality and information-sharing which makes clear that the protection of the child is the most important consideration. The Seal of Confession is absolute.	Met fully
2.7	The procedures include contact details for local child protection services e.g. (Republic of Ireland) the local Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána; (Northern Ireland) the local health and social services trust and the PSNI.	Met fully

The 2009 safeguarding policy provides step by step guidance on what to do in the event of an allegation (P10), and is consistent with civil legislation. They are clearly written, and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Person is accurately described. There is a process for recording incidents, and secure record keeping arrangements. Criteria 2.1 – 2.4 are assessed as fully met. Whilst there is reference in the 2009 safeguarding policy to the need for a complaints procedure in order to comply with best practice, further work needs to be done to specify what the procedure consists of. This criterion refers to the need for a general complaints procedure which can be activated to deal with issues not related to abusive behaviour or intent. Criterion 2.5 is therefore assessed as partially met. The 2009 safeguarding policy addresses the issues relating to confidentiality and the paramouncy of the child. Contact details for local civil child protection agencies are included with the versions of the 2009 safeguarding policy supplied to each of the 9 Augustinian communities. Criteria 2.6 and 2.7 are assessed as fully met.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Prior Provincial should develop a procedure for the management of general complaints against members of the Order (Criterion 2.5).

Table 1
**Incidence of safeguarding allegations received within the Augustinians
against priests and brothers, from 1st January 1975 up to time of review.**

1	Number of Congregational priests and brothers against whom allegations have been made since the 1 st January 1975 up to the date of the review.	11
2	Total number of allegations received by the Congregation since 1 st January, 1975.	33
3	Number of allegations reported to An Garda Síochána/PSNI involving priests and brothers since 1 st January 1975.	17
4	Number of allegations reported to the TUSLA/HSE/HSC (or the Health Boards which preceded the setting up of the HSE,) involving priests and brothers of the Congregation since 1 st January 1975.	12
5	Number of priests and brothers (still members of the Congregation) against whom an allegation was made and who were living at the date of the review.	7
6	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who are deceased.	4
7	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation has been made and who are in ministry.	1
8	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who are 'Out of Ministry', but are still members of the Congregation.	3
9	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who are retired.	3
10	Number of priests and brothers against whom an allegation was made and who have left the Congregation.	0
11	Number of priests and brothers of the Congregation who have been convicted of having committed an offence or offences against a child or young person since the 1 st January 1975.	0

The reviewers have read the files of 7 Augustinian priests or brothers who are living, in respect of whom sexual abuse allegations have been recorded. . The reviewers also read the files of 2 (from a total of 4) deceased priests or brothers who were the subject of allegations, as well as 2 files relating to allegations made in relation to lay people who were associated with the Order. The structure and content of the files post 2013 is of a good standard and it is evident that considerable work has been done recently to make them accessible. There are however gaps in record maintenance over the wider time frame of the review.

In the majority of the 11 cases of men subject to sexual abuse allegations, there have been significant intervals of time between the alleged time of the incident and the date when the matter was first reported to the Order: 19 refer to dates of abuse before 1975; 10 refer to the period between 1975 -1990; and 4 are not dated..

The total number of possible victims of sexual abuse is estimated to be in the region of 30, and in a number of instances victims have not been identified. More than one third of the victims resided in other jurisdictions where the priests/ brothers were in ministry. Where known the majority of victims were contacted by the Order, but others, due to a lack of information, have not been contacted. The time scales for reporting allegations to the civil authorities in Ireland are variable. Of the total of 33 sexual abuse allegations, the reviewers estimate that 17 had not been reported to An Garda Siochana, and 12 had not been reported to the HSE/TUSLA at the time of the review. It is noted that a full transfer of all information relating to the allegations to An Garda Siochana and to TUSLA have been undertaken subsequently.

The Order signed up to the implementation of the NBSCCCI child safeguarding standards in 2009. All cases involving living priests or brothers first reported to the Order after this time have been notified promptly to An Garda Siochana. In 1 case the allegation was formally withdrawn. There is evidence of delay in notifying information concerning deceased men during this period.

None of the Friars from the Order of St Augustine, in respect of whom allegations have been made, has been criminally convicted. This has meant that the onus to assess suitability for ministry and potential risk to children and young people has rested with the Order's internal processes and the application of canon law. In the case of Father A, an historical allegation made from a person in another jurisdiction led to his prompt withdrawal from all active ministries. There is no file record of any canonical process, and 3 years elapsed before there is any evidence of risk assessment or case management. This priest has retired, is under supervision and in very restricted ministry. The case of Father B against whom an historical allegation was made was promptly reported to the civil authorities and a canonical investigation initiated. The progress of the canonical investigation was suspended, until a civil action could be dealt with, and then resumed. In this case the incoming Prior Provincial then took the view that the investigative process had not been complete, resulting in a second canonical inquiry as well as re-referral to the civil agencies in Ireland. The need to restart the canonical process in this case was confirmed when advice was sought from the NBSCCCI, and the process in this case is

still on-going. This priest is also currently under supervision and in very restricted ministry. In the case of Father C, an allegation was made concerning abuse in another jurisdiction. Following consultation with An Garda Síochána and on their advice, a formal notification was not made, given that the abuse took place in another jurisdiction. It was reported after a delay of 2 ½ years to the HSE. The file notes that the complainant did not wish to have the matter reported to police authorities in Ireland or in his own jurisdiction. Father C stepped aside from ministry. A preliminary canonical investigation has taken a number of years to process. Fr. C is still out of ministry and under supervision.

Fr. D disclosed his abuse of several children in another jurisdiction, which occurred over 50 years ago. The information was shared promptly with the civil authorities in Ireland. He has been suspended from ministry, a risk assessment has been undertaken and he is currently under supervision. He is elderly, retired and has since been placed out of ministry. Only one of the victims is known.

Fr. E has been suspended from ministry and has been under care and close supervision by the Order for several decades. He is elderly and retired. There are a number of allegations and concerns on file, referring to Ireland as well as another jurisdiction. Most of these were made prior to 2000 and it is not clear from the record how they were managed. There is no file evidence of notification to the civil authorities, or of consideration of canonical process.

In the case of Fr. F, the file does not record actual complaints from any individuals, but contains 5 concerns about potential risks to children or young people, going back to the 1980s. Fr. F's ministry was restricted by the Order and he underwent a risk assessment which raised some issues about his ministry with children or young people. He initially sought and was granted leave of absence from ministry, which has subsequently been extended. He currently lives independently of the Order, and is not the subject of supervision. The file does not establish that the civil authorities have been notified of all the concerns in this case. There is no reference on file to consideration of canonical process. The reviewers have advised the Order to notify the civil authorities of the recorded concerns in this case and to re-assess Fr. F's relationship to the Order.

It is noted that that the case of Fr. G did not progress canonically, following notification to the civil authorities, on the basis that the allegation was formally withdrawn. The reviewers noted, however, that a copy of the letter containing the allegation was not on file, and this restricted their ability to make a judgement on the appropriateness of the subsequent actions, although there was a record that this case was referred to An Garda Síochána.

The reviewers have concluded that the written records of how the 5 men who are subject to supervision by the Order were managed are poorly evidenced prior to July 2013. They were told that this was done, in some cases, based on a specific precept imposing restrictions and, in other cases, on a more informal basis. Prior to 2013, the Order drew on its membership of an inter-congregational advisory group for advice and guidance on

the management of individual cases. Whilst there are some references on file to the input of this group in individual cases, there is no evidence that monitoring of cases was undertaken on a regular basis by it.

Post July 2013 the Order established its own process for case management. Following the appointment of the incoming Prior Provincial, and of the Designated Safeguarding Person, the Order firstly set up a temporary Safeguarding Transition Group (involving the current and ex-Provincial and the current and ex-Designated Safeguarding Person) and then the current Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel. This panel, which began work on 26.09.13 and has been meeting monthly, is mandated to:

1. To ensure that all allegations against OSA priests and brothers are properly managed in compliance with civil law and canon law based on best practice and professional advice;
2. To ensure the on-going development of safeguarding standards and practices across the province in response to identified needs.

The Panel consists of 5 members – the Prior Provincial, the Designated Safeguarding Officer, a lay person with extensive experience in counselling and two other Friar members: (the Deputy Provincial (who is also a member of the Provincial Council) and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person. The Prior Provincial and the Designated Safeguarding Officer have acknowledged to the reviewers that the terms of reference contains functions – case management and safeguarding – which are recognized in the 2009 safeguarding policy as distinct and separate, and that their roles should be separate from either function. Their rationale is that the safeguarding ‘project’ is at a relatively early stage of re-development, and that this temporary arrangement is the best way of ensuring that the core work is appropriately managed and co-ordinated. It is their view that the functions can be separated at a later stage, as awareness of safeguarding is increased, and as more trained people become available. In particular, they see the possibility of strengthening the local community safeguarding representatives to enable them to take on responsibility for the preventative aspects of the work. The Order is also a member of the NBSCCCI’s National Case Management Review Group (NCMRG), giving it access to specialist advice in individual cases. The reviewers were told that the Order felt that advice on most historical cases was within the competence of the local Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel (CM&SAP), and that the NCMRG would be consulted where the complexities and challenges of a particular case was outside the competence of the CM&SAP. One such case was referred in October 2013 and the Provincial committed to implement in full the advice given.

The history of case management prior to 2013 in the Augustinian Order is quite poor, with incomplete files, gaps in reporting to the statutory agencies, minimal evidence of safety planning and inconsistent application of canonical process. As stated in the introduction the reviewers acknowledge evidence of a proactive approach in the early 2000s to drafting a child safeguarding policy and to training and selection of safeguarding representatives for the communities. Whilst the 2009 policy confirmed that some progress was made, any momentum appeared to be lost in subsequent years, and

child safeguarding is some distance short of the expected milestones for 2014. The safeguarding agenda has been prioritised by the incoming Prior Provincial since July 2013. There is a lot of work to be done, the appropriate structure still needs to be created and a work programme implemented. The reviewers consider that it is important that the task of reshaping child safeguarding in the Order is set out as a matter of urgency in a coherent and strategic safeguarding plan and that progress needs to be formally reviewed by the Provincial and the Provincial Council within a period of 18 months of the publication of this report. This is addressed more fully in Section 7 of the review.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The Prior Provincial should ensure that reporting of all new allegations to the civil authorities in Ireland is prompt and in accordance with the safeguarding policy, irrespective of whether they are historical or not.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the current role and function of the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel is kept under review, and that its evolution into separate functions is planned and achieved through the strategic safeguarding plan.

Standard 3

Preventing Harm to Children

This standard requires that all procedures and practices relating to creating a safe environment for children be in place and effectively implemented. These include having safe recruitment and vetting practices in place, having clear codes of behaviour for adults who work with children and by operating safe activities for children.

Compliance with Standard 3 is only fully achieved when an Order meets the requirements of all twelve criteria against which the standard is measured. These criteria are grouped into three areas, safe recruitment and vetting, codes of behaviour and operating safe activities for children.

Criteria – safe recruitment and vetting

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.1	There are policies and procedures for recruiting Church personnel and assessing their suitability to work with children.	Met fully
3.2	The safe recruitment and vetting policy is in line with best practice guidance.	Met fully
3.3	All those who have the opportunity for regular contact with children, or who are in positions of trust, complete a form declaring any previous court convictions and undergo other checks as required by legislation and guidance and this information is then properly assessed and recorded.	Met fully

The 2009 safeguarding policy identifies key stages in the recruitment process (P16), and contains application and declaration pro-forma. It states that all Friars in active ministry and adult staff and volunteers who are involved with children/young people or vulnerable adults are required to obtain clearance through the Garda vetting unit. It stipulates that a person will be designated to act as the clearing person for vetting. In practice, the reviewers were informed that vetting is administered through the Priors (or parish priests) in the local Augustinian communities and the information then stored locally.

Approximately 30 people require to be vetted each year. The Order has applied to An Garda Siochana to be registered as a vetting organization but this has been turned down on the basis that the numbers are too low. The Order has accepted the need to develop a centralized data base for vetting information. The reviewers accept that the requirements of Criteria 3.1 – 3.3 are fully met, although it is important to progress the work on a centralized data base managed by a single nominated person.

RECOMMENDATION 8: The Prior Provincial should ensure that work to create a single centralized data base for vetting information is progressed, with a single nominated manager.

Criteria – Codes of behaviour

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.4	The Church organisation provides guidance on appropriate/ expected standards of behaviour of, adults towards children.	Met fully
3.5	There is guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour of children towards other children (anti-bullying policy).	Met partially
3.6	There are clear ways in which Church personnel can raise allegations and suspicions about unacceptable behaviour towards children by other Church personnel or volunteers ('whistle-blowing'), confidentially if necessary.	Not met
3.7	There are processes for dealing with children's unacceptable behaviour that do not involve physical punishment or any other form of degrading or humiliating treatment.	Met partially
3.8	Guidance to staff and children makes it clear that discriminatory behaviour or language in relation to any of the following is not acceptable: race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality or political views.	Met partially
3.9	Policies include guidelines on the personal/ intimate care of children with disabilities, including appropriate and inappropriate touch.	Met fully

Appendix 4 of the 2009 safeguarding policy provides detailed guidance on expected standards of behaviour of adults towards children and Criterion 3.4 is assessed as fully met. The 2009 safeguarding policy refers to the need to address bullying (P29), to the importance of positive child-centred statements and to the need for sensitivity and clear communication when working with vulnerable children (P30). There is a paragraph which considers how to respond to disruptive behaviour by children/young people (P8). The reviewers consider that aspects of Criteria 3.5 (anti-bullying), 3.7 (processes for dealing with unacceptable behaviour) and 3.8 (anti-discriminatory practice) are recognized, but that the policy needs to be more explicit. These criteria are therefore

viewed as partially met. The Order of St Augustine, need to develop a ‘whistle-blowing’ policy, in order to meet Criterion 3.6. Criterion 3.9, relating to children with special needs or disabilities, is fully met (P30).

RECOMMENDATION 9: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the areas of whistle-blowing, anti-bullying, guidance on dealing with unacceptable behaviour by children, and anti-discriminatory practice, are fully addressed in the review of the safeguarding policy (Criteria 3.5 – 3.8).

Criteria – Operating safe activities for children

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
3.10	There is guidance on assessing all possible risks when working with children – especially in activities that involve time spent away from home.	Met Fully
3.11	When operating projects/ activities children are adequately supervised and protected at all times.	Met fully
3.12	Guidelines exist for appropriate use of information technology (such as mobile phones, email, digital cameras, websites, the Internet) to make sure that children are not put in danger and exposed to abuse and exploitation.	Not met

The reviewers consider that Criteria 3.10 and 3.11 are fully met. The policy (P31) provides a checklist of risks to be considered and guidance on supervision. The policy does not provide guidance on issues related to information technology, and Criterion 3.12 is not met.

RECOMMENDATION 10: The Prior Provincial should ensure that guidelines in relation to information technology (Criterion 3.12) are addressed in the revision of the safeguarding policy.

Standard 4

Training and Education

All Church personnel should be offered training in child protection to maintain high standards and good practice.

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
4.1	All Church personnel who work with children are inducted into the Church’s policy and procedures on child protection when they begin working within Church organisations.	Met Fully
4.2	Identified Church personnel are provided with appropriate training for keeping children safe with regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.	Met partially
4.3	Training is provided to those with additional responsibilities such as recruiting and selecting staff, dealing with complaints, disciplinary processes, managing risk, acting as designated person.	Met partially
4.4	Training programmes are approved by National Board for Safeguarding Children and updated in line with current legislation, guidance and best practice.	Met Fully

The 2009 safeguarding policy states that those directly involved in work with children or young people should receive accredited training in the procedures, and that the Designated Safeguarding Person will provide this training, or arrange to have it provided. The Designated Safeguarding Person has a training/management background, and currently combines training with his other roles in case management and safeguarding. He has organized training events in Meath St. and in John’s Lane (Dublin) to meet Criterion 4.1. It is noted that the development of the wider, preventative, safeguarding agenda in this Order is at a relatively early stage and that training in some areas, such as that of safeguarding representatives, has taken place under the diocesan programmes. The application of Criteria 4.2 and 4.3 requires each order/congregation to develop a training needs assessment for its dedicated safeguarding personnel, as the basis for a training plan. Whilst safeguarding personnel have availed of NBSCCCI training opportunities as they have arisen, this currently falls short of the planned approach required to meet Criteria 4.2 and 4.3, which are designated as partially met. The training programmes which have been supplied are NBSCCCI approved, and Criterion 4.4 is fully met.

RECOMMENDATION 11: The Prior Provincial should ensure that a planned and needs led approach to training is developed to support the strategic safeguarding plan (Criteria 4.2 and 4.3).

Standard 5

Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message

This standard requires that the Church’s safeguarding policies and procedures be successfully communicated to Church personnel and parishioners (including children). This can be achieved through the prominent display of the Church policy, making children aware of their right to speak out and knowing who to speak to, having the Designated Person’s contact details clearly visible, ensuring Church personnel have access to contact details for child protection services, having good working relationships with statutory child protection agencies and developing a communication plan which reflects the Church’s commitment to transparency.

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
5.1	The child protection policy is openly displayed and available to everyone.	Met Fully
5.2	Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse and who to speak to if they have concerns.	Met Partially
5.3	Everyone in Church organisations knows who the designated person is and how to contact them.	Met Fully
5.4	Church personnel are provided with contact details of local child protection services, such as Health and Social Care Trusts / Health Service Executive, PSNI, An Garda Síochána, telephone helplines and the designated person.	Met Fully
5.5	Church organisations establish links with statutory child protection agencies to develop good working relationships in order to keep children safe.	Met Fully
5.6	Church organisations at diocesan and religious order level have an established communications policy which reflects a commitment to transparency and openness.	Met Partially

The 2009 Child safeguarding policy, with local customised contact details for the civil agencies is available in all of the Augustinian communities and is available on the website of the Irish Province www.augustinians.ie. Criterion 5.1 is therefore met fully. Whilst there is reference in the policy to the rights of children and young people to safety and care, this needs to be enhanced by evidence of communication and outreach. The Augustinians need to consider the development of material aimed at informing children and young people of their right to be protected and of what to do if they feel concerned in order to fully comply with Criterion 5.2. Criterion 5.4 is fully met, as already noted,

through the dissemination at local community level, of relevant contact information. Representatives from both An Garda Síochána and TUSLA have confirmed that their agencies have no current concerns about the quality of safeguarding communication with this Order. The Order has produced working guidelines on safeguarding communication (August 2014), and there is evidence of activity to publicise its safeguarding commitment (through posters, awareness raising events etc. at community level). It is noted again that the safeguarding agenda did not effectively begin to be implemented until 2013 and that the completion of a communications plan should be addressed as part of the strategic safeguarding plan.

RECOMMENDATION 12: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the Province puts a communications plan in place (Criterion 5.6), including dedicated material for children and young people (Criterion 5.2).

Standard 6

Access to Advice and Support

Those who have suffered child abuse should receive a compassionate and just response and should be offered appropriate pastoral care to rebuild their lives.

Those who have harmed others should be helped to face up to the reality of abuse, as well as being assisted in healing.

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
6.1	Church personnel with special responsibilities for keeping children safe have access to specialist advice, support and information on child protection.	Met Partially
6.2	Contacts are established at a national and/ or local level with the relevant child protection/ welfare agencies and helplines that can provide information, support and assistance to children and Church personnel.	Met Fully
6.3	There is guidance on how to respond to and support a child who is suspected to have been abused whether that abuse is by someone within the Church or in the community, including family members or peers.	Met Fully
6.4	Information is provided to those who have experienced abuse on how to seek support.	Met Partially
6.5	Appropriate support is provided to those who have perpetrated abuse to help them to face up to the reality of abuse as well as to promote healing in a manner which does not compromise children's safety.	Met Partially

As noted in 4.2 (above), the Order needs to progress its training needs analysis in order to ensure that staff involved in safeguarding receive training at the appropriate level. Criterion 6.1 is therefore assessed as partially met. The Augustinians have developed positive relationships with the NBSCCCI, and with other religious orders, in relation to child safeguarding, and Criterion 6.2 is assessed as met fully. There is guidance in the 2009 safeguarding policy (P32) on how to respond to a child who is disclosing abuse, meeting Criterion 6.2.

The reviewers have noted evidence in some individual files of commitment on the part of the Order to meet, engage, listen to and support survivors. In the case of Father B, the Prior Provincial was critical of the manner in which the canonical process had been conducted, on the basis, inter alia, that due consideration had not been given to a witness statement from the

complainant, leading to the creation of a new inquiry. This action is commended because of its focus on the inclusion of the survivor experience. The reviewers have been informed that a process is now under way to seek to recruit a pool of lay support persons to work directly with survivors. They consider that Criterion 6.4 is partially met at present and that necessary steps to sit alongside the recruitment of support persons include a survivor policy statement and survivor communication material, such as leaflets.

As described under the section on Standard 2, the Order of St Augustine established its own internal case management process in 2013, which includes the identification of Care and Safety Management Plan supervisors responsible for working with individual men. These supervisors are drawn at present from the membership of the Order. Reviews of work in individual cases have been undertaken since 2013 via the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel (CMSAP) (in the majority of cases) and are recorded. One case has been referred to the National Case Management Reference Group (NCMRG). Prior to 2013 there is no evidence that there was any system for monitoring work on each case and as already noted, the reviewers were told that this was done informally. The reviewers interviewed two supervisors who stated that they felt comfortable and supported in their roles, but also expressed a lack of clarity about the role of the Panel. The reviewers did not see any evidence on file, of recording of individual contacts between supervisors and supervisees. The reviewers consider that Criterion 6.5 is partially met. Further work needs to be undertaken to a) clarify the role of the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel in monitoring work with all the men under supervision; b) develop protocols for recording work in individual cases; c) assess the training needs of supervisors and d) provide guidance on the threshold for using the NCMRG. The process for individual case management needs to be stated in the revised safeguarding policy.

RECOMMENDATION 13: The Prior Provincial should develop a policy for engaging with survivors, to include the recruitment of a pool of lay support persons and communications material (Criterion 6.3). This should be stated in the revised child safeguarding policy.

RECOMMENDATION 14: The Prior Provincial should a) clarify the role of the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel (and its successor) in monitoring work with all the men under supervision (Criterion 6.5); b) develop protocols for recording work in individual case files; c) review the training needs of supervisors; and d) provide guidance on the threshold for using the National Case Management Reference Group. The process for individual case management needs to be stated in the revised child safeguarding policy.

Standard 7

Implementing and Monitoring Standards

Standard 7 outlines the need to develop a plan of action, which monitors the effectiveness of the steps being taken to keep children safe. This is achieved through making a written plan, having the human and financial resources available, monitoring compliance and ensuring all allegations and suspicions are recorded and stored securely.

Criteria

Number	Criterion	Met fully or Met partially or Not met
7.1	There is a written plan showing what steps will be taken to keep children safe, who is responsible for implementing these measures and when these will be completed.	Not Met
7.2	The human or financial resources necessary for implementing the plan are made available.	Met Fully
7.3	Arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with child protection policies and procedures.	Met Partially
7.4	Processes are in place to ask parishioners (children and parents/ carers) about their views on policies and practices for keeping children safe.	Met Fully
7.5	All incidents, allegations/ suspicions of abuse are recorded and stored securely.	Met Fully

This review has highlighted historical inconsistencies in relation to safeguarding prior to 2013. It is clear however that the Prior Provincial and the Designated Safeguarding Person have the vision and commitment to take this work forward and that a number of initiatives are already in place. The consolidation of safeguarding in the Order would benefit greatly from a three year safeguarding development/action plan to meet the requirements of Criterion 7.1, reflecting the work which has been started and the work which still needs to be undertaken, and setting realistic targets. The reviewers have been assured that financial resources will be committed by the Order as required to fully implement child safeguarding, and that Criterion 7.2 is fully met. The reviewers have noted that arrangements have already been put in place to monitor safeguarding activity, using a safeguarding checklist, in the 9 communities spanning 15 locations (12 of the locations have provided data at the time of the review), and that the Designated Safeguarding Person has carried out 6 ‘site’ visits in 2014 to review progress. Progress in relation to safeguarding awareness and practice is variable depending on the activity and age profile of each community, with the parish communities very much to the forefront. The reviewers consider that Criterion 7.3 is partially met at present. It is recommended that, alongside the strategic safeguarding plan, the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel (CMSAP) (or its replacement) needs to develop a yearly safeguarding report for the Prior Provincial. In relation to Criteria 7.4 the reviewers have met or consulted with parish representatives from 3 of the Augustinian parishes, whose

commitment to and awareness of the safeguarding agenda was impressive. This is a considerable source of strength in the Order, and should be developed to take on more responsibility for the preventative dimension of child safeguarding. Criterion 7.4 is assessed to be fully met. Finally, the reviewers have seen very secure storage arrangements for the safeguarding data, and Criterion 7.5 is fully met.

RECOMMENDATION 15: The Prior Provincial should set out a three year child safeguarding development/action plan (Criterion 7.1) with agreed targets and time scales, to structure and monitor the activity necessary to make progress towards the implementation of all of the safeguarding standards.

RECOMMENDATION 16: The Prior Provincial should require the production of an annual report on safeguarding activity (Criterion 7.3). This should be implemented initially by the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel, but subsequently by the body which takes responsibility for the safeguarding awareness and prevention.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the 2009 policy revision is completed without delay (Criterion 1.4). This should be done as an interim measure, pending the revision of NBSCCCI's standards and the development of a common Church Safeguarding policy in 2015.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the revised policy contains his clear signed endorsement and that of the Provincial Council, (Criterion 1.2) and that it must be implemented by all members of the Order.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the requirement for priests in transit from other Provinces or administrative areas to evidence celebretis is written into the policy in order to fully meet Criterion 1.5.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the internal process, including the application of canonical procedures, which will be applied to members in respect of whom child abuse allegations are made, are fully described in the policy (Criterion 1.6).

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Prior Provincial should develop a procedure for the management of general complaints against members of the Order (Criterion 2.5).

RECOMMENDATION 6: The Prior Provincial should ensure that reporting of all new allegations to the civil authorities in Ireland is prompt and in accordance with the safeguarding policy, irrespective of whether they are historical or not.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the current role and function of the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel is kept under review, and that its evolution into separate functions is planned and achieved through the strategic safeguarding plan.

RECOMMENDATION 8: The Prior Provincial should ensure that work to create a single centralized data base for vetting information is progressed, with a single nominated manager.

RECOMMENDATION 9: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the areas of whistle-blowing, anti-bullying, guidance on dealing with unacceptable behaviour by children, and anti-discriminatory practice, are fully addressed in the review of the safeguarding policy (Criteria 3.5 – 3.8).

RECOMMENDATION 10: The Prior Provincial should ensure that guidelines in relation to information technology (Criterion 3.12) are addressed in the revision of the safeguarding policy.

RECOMMENDATION 11: The Prior Provincial should ensure that a planned and needs led approach to training is developed to support the strategic safeguarding plan (Criteria 4.2 and 4.3).

RECOMMENDATION 12: The Prior Provincial should ensure that the Province puts a communications plan in place (Criterion 5.6), including dedicated material for children and young people (Criterion 5.2).

RECOMMENDATION 13: The Prior Provincial should develop a policy for engaging with survivors, to include the recruitment of a pool of lay support persons and communications material (Criterion 6.3). This should be stated in the revised child safeguarding policy.

RECOMMENDATION 14: The Prior Provincial should a) clarify the role of the Case Management and Safeguarding Advisory Panel (and its successor) in monitoring work with all the men under supervision (Criterion 6.5); b) develop protocols for recording work in individual case files; c) review the training needs of supervisors; and d) provide guidance on the threshold for using the National Case Management Reference Group. The process for individual case management needs to be stated in the revised child safeguarding policy.

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Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

**Terms of Reference (which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying
Notes)**

1. To ascertain the full extent of all complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Church Authority (Diocese/religious congregation/missionary society) by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 up to the date of the review, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the Church Authority, and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Church Authority.
2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Church Authority by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 to the date of the review, against Catholic clergy and/or religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the Church Authority.
3. Examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Church Authority.
4. To ascertain all of the cases during the relevant period in which the Church Authority
 - knew of child sexual abuse involving Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and including those clergy and/or religious visiting, studying and/or retired;
 - had strong and clear suspicion of child sexual abuse; or
 - had reasonable concern;
 - and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Church Authority.

As well as examine

- Communication by the Church Authority with the Civil Authorities;
 - Current risks and their management.
5. To consider and report on the implementation of the 7 child safeguarding standards set out in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* (2009), including the following:

- a) A review of the current child safeguarding policies and guidance materials in use by the Church Authority and an evaluation of their application;
- b) How the Church Authority creates and maintains safe environments.
- c) How victims are responded to by the Church Authority
- d) What training is taking place within the Church Authority
- e) How advice and support is accessed by the Church Authority in relation to victim support and assessment and management of accused respondents.
- f) What systems are in place for monitoring practice and reporting back to the Church Authority.

Accompanying Notes

Note 1: Definition of Child Sexual Abuse:

The definition of child sexual abuse is in accordance with the definition adopted by the Ferns Report (and the Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin). The following is the relevant extract from the Ferns Report:

“While definitions of child sexual abuse vary according to context, probably the most useful definition and broadest for the purposes of this Report was that which was adopted by the Law Reform Commission in 1990¹ and later developed in Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Health and Children, 1999) which state that “child sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or that of others”. Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- sexual intercourse with the child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- sexual exploitation of a child which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape, or other media) or the manipulation for those purposes of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse.”

¹ This definition was originally proposed by the Western Australia Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse, 1987 and is adopted by the Law Reform Commission (1990) *Report on Child Sexual Abuse*, p. 8.

Note 2: Definition of Allegation:

The term allegation is defined as an accusation or complaint where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, or is being sexually abused, or is at risk of sexual abuse, including retrospective disclosure by adults. It includes allegations that did not necessarily result in a criminal or canonical investigation, or a civil action, and allegations that are unsubstantiated but which are plausible. (NB: Erroneous information does not necessarily make an allegation implausible, for example, a priest arrived in a parish in the Diocese a year after the alleged abuse, but other information supplied appears credible and the alleged victim may have mistaken the date).

Note 3: False Allegations:

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland wishes to examine any cases of false allegation so as to review the management of the complaint by the Diocese/religious congregation/missionary society.

Note 4: Random sample:

The random sample (if applicable) must be taken from complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse made against all deceased Catholic clergy/religious covering the entire of the relevant period being 1st January 1975 to the date of the Review.

Note 5: Civil Authorities:

Civil Authorities are defined in the Republic of Ireland as the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána and in Northern Ireland as the Health and Social Care Trust and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.