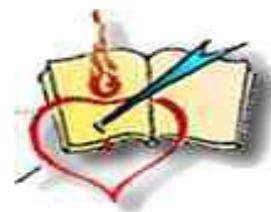


OSA Child Safeguarding Development



Progress Report

2017 – 2019



Standard 1 – Creating & Maintaining Safe Environments

The achievements of the past three years would not have been possible without the commitment and energy of the Safeguarding Development Group (Est. April 2016). Five meetings were held annually (83% Average Attendance) based on a work programme detailed in the *Safeguarding Development Plan '17 – '19*. Approved by the Provincial Council (April 2017), the plan was then monitored each year in the form of annual *Progress Reports*.

The OSA Vetting Policy (June 2017), finalised in light of the National Vetting Bureau legislation 2016, was further complemented by the introduction of the customised *Ministries Leaflet* and the *Volunteer Ministries Information Pack* (Mar. 2019) for Province wide use. The *Adult Code of Behaviour* (Mar. 2018) provided an opportunity for existing volunteers to formally 'sign-up' to an explicit set of behaviours and in so doing, provide contact details for compiling a Volunteer Database which in some locations remains a

work-in-progress. Compliance varies from 33 – 100% across 6 churches with 4 locations yet to identify the level of response.

The published *IT Guidelines for Use in a Church Context* has allowed each Local Safeguarding Group to review local needs and respond accordingly.

Clarifying the responsibilities of external groups using OSA facilities, while not applicable in 8 locations, is in hand in the remaining two churches. Similarly, greater clarity has been achieved among friars working in other organisations regarding their child safeguarding & protection responsibilities; what is needed is for this to be formally recorded and signed-off by each Prior in consultation with the respective LSG.

It was decided not to introduce a new 'Complaints Procedure' as recommended by the NBSCCCI. However, a general complaints procedure is now available on the OSA website in compliance with good governance as required by the Charities Regulator.

Standard 5 - Training & Support for Keeping Children Safe

The following training was requested and provided during 2018 and 2019 respectively (Note: * refers to Diocesan Trainers).

Dates 2018		Location	Info Session	Full Day	Volunteers	Friars
1.	27 Sept.	Limerick*	✓		38	5
2.	10 Nov.	Limerick		✓	7	4
3.	22 Nov.	Ballyboden	✓		26	4
Dates 2019						
1.	27 Feb.	St. Catherine's & John's Lane	✓		45	5
2.	5 Mar.	Galway	✓		40	4
3.	2 April	St. Catherine's & John's Lane	✓		25	2
4.	22 May	Drogheda	✓		45	3
5.	12 June	Drogheda	✓		25	2
6.	21 Sept.	Cork		✓	23	3
7.	25 Sept.	Finglas South*	✓		58	2
8.	16 Oct.	Fethard	✓		20	2
9.	12 Nov.	Limerick*	✓		12	
Participant Totals					364	36

No customised training was requested which may reflect a gradual decline in ministry with children and a lower intake of new volunteers across the Province.



Standard 6 - Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Information sharing and awareness raising was supported by the publication and distribution of 12 Safeguarding Newsletters that included regular updates on the work of the SDG. The establishment of a 'Safeguarding Network' (April 2017) and repeated each year since has allowed local representatives and friars to receive inputs from external speakers, discuss challenges within the work and consider the practical use of new resources mentioned earlier. Participant feedback has been excellent with the venue location alternating between Dublin and The Horse & Jockey Hotel.



Reaching different audiences with the OSA Safeguarding message was facilitated by the Child Friendly Leaflet (composed primarily by children 4 – 12 yrs. Drogheda Family Mass Team), as well as the framed posters and the pop-up banner 'Welcome to God's Family'.

The autumn Safeguarding W/Ends have been supported by the reading and distribution of the Provincial's letter and in some cases, a leaflet to be shared with the faith community; reaction to the 2018 version was mixed with some churches deciding not to use the leaflet/letter (i.e. 'Sue & Joe' plus Provincial's response).

Attempts over the course of the Plan to producing suitable materials for young teenagers have been unsuccessful to-date.

Standard 7 – Quality Assuring Compliance

Progress Reports have been completed each year, reviewed in detail by the SDG members and feedback given to each Local Safeguarding Group. These reports form invaluable records of church activities. In addition, a separate *Audit* exercise undertaken by the Safeguarding Officer Oct. – Dec. 2019 highlighted what procedures were in place and what aspect of the work needed follow-up attention.

Both *Progress* and *Audit Reports* have helped to inform the drafting process of *Safeguarding Development Plan '20 – '22* with the final version to be recommended to the Provincial Council and then launched at the Safeguarding Network in March 2020.

Conclusion

Safeguarding Development Plan '17 – '19

Summary Overview

Total No. of Actions Planned
(excluding subsidiary actions): 25

Total Fully Completed: 16.

Total Partly Completed: 5

Total Outstanding: 3 (All relate to
the completion of *Safeguarding
Development Plan '20 – '22*).

Total Action(s) Dropped: 1

Who can say whether the hours of voluntary and paid work briefly profiled in this report:

- *Is improving people's confidence in the how they trust the church and those who minister on its behalf?*
- *Is motivating individuals to become involved as volunteers and encouraging parents to allow their children to join specific ministry groups?*
- *Is offering new life to friars and those who wish to be called the People of God?*

Time will tell. For the moment, Local Safeguarding Group members keep those hopes alive, ensuring that the appropriate procedures are in place

and the ground ready for seeds to be planted and harvested in due course.



Finally, once approved by the Provincial Council (Feb. 2020), the implementation and review of the *Safeguarding Development Plan '20 – '22* will become the responsibility of the Safeguarding Development Group, alongside the on-going important work of each Local Safeguarding Group.

**“Faith is to believe
what you do not
yet see; the reward
for this faith is to
see what you
believe.”**

– Saint Augustine