



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

Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice

in the

Irish Region of the Anglo- Irish Province of the

Discalced Carmelite Friars (OCD)

undertaken by

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the

Catholic Church in Ireland (National Board)

Date of Review Report: February 2024

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Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church Ireland (National Board) was established in 2006 to provide advice, services and assistance in the ongoing development of safeguarding children within the Roman Catholic Church on the Island of Ireland; to monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice; and to report on these activities. This is comprehensively set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Company.

Church authorities who have entered into an agreement with the National Board through signing a Memorandum of Understanding have committed to following *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016*.

The Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars Ireland (OCD) was previously reviewed in October 2014 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2008*. The report of the first Review can be found on the National Board's website www.safeguarding.ie/publications. The second Review is an opportunity for the National Board to confirm that recommendations from the previous Review, October 2014, were implemented.

The recommendations from the previous Review, October 2014, are set out below along with the current status of implementation:

Recommendation 1

That the Provincial of the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) request the immediate assistance of the NBSCCCI in producing and adopting an interim policy and procedures document that would meet the requirements of the NBSCCCI's Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland. **Implemented:** OCD in consultation with the NBSCCCI produced its interim Child Safeguarding Policy in November 2014 which was examined and approved by the NBSCCCI.

Recommendation 2

That the Provincial of the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) develops a written policy giving a commitment to report child protection concerns to the statutory authorities without delay. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 gave a commitment to report child protection concerns to the statutory authorities without delay.

Recommendation 3

With consideration to Recommendation 1, the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) should incorporate into their revised policies and procedures document, a full and comprehensive text regarding the management of allegations. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 included clear information regarding the management of allegations.

Recommendation 4

The Provincial must initiate, as a matter of urgency a review of Fr A's case to date, to establish what is the nature of Fr A's ministry; how a decision was made that he could have any form of public ministry and the extent of children's access to the environment where Fr A resides and exercises his ministry. The Provincial should seek the advice of his Advisory Panel in relation to managing any risk identified.

Implemented: OCD immediately initiated and completed a full review of Fr A's Case. The case was presented to the National Case Management Committee in August and September 2015 and OCD implemented the recommendations made.

Recommendation 5 The Provincial should appoint a suitably qualified person to conduct a preliminary investigation, consult with the civil authorities and establish the facts of this case in order to determine the status of Friar B's ministry. **Implemented:** OCD immediately appointed a suitable qualified person to complete a canonical preliminary investigation and consulted with the civil authorities. Following completion of the investigation Friar B was returned to full ministry.

Recommendation 6

With consideration to Recommendation 1, the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Safeguarding Committee should incorporate into their revised policies and procedures document, full and comprehensive text regarding safe recruitment and vetting. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 included clear information for safe recruitment and vetting.

Recommendation 7

With consideration to Recommendation 1, the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Safeguarding Committee should incorporate into their revised policies and procedures document, a full and comprehensive text regarding training and education. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 included clear information regarding education and training.

Recommendation 8

That the Safeguarding Committee/Co-ordinator of the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) conducts an audit of all members, lay staff, and volunteers who hold a safeguarding role within the Order, and plan and provide necessary safeguarding training for them as a matter of urgency. **Implemented:** OCD completed an audit regarding all members, lay staff and volunteers and included in their Strategic Plan training objectives and actions to complete necessary safeguarding training.

Recommendation 9

That the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Provincial consult the NBSCCCI in relation to how best to plan for and deliver child safeguarding training within the Order. **Implemented:** OCD consulted and met with the NBSCCCI and agreed a plan to deliver child safeguarding training in OCD.

Recommendation 10

With consideration to Recommendation 1, the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Provincial should incorporate into their revised policies and procedures document, a full and comprehensive text regarding how the OCDs intend to communicate their messages regarding the importance of safeguarding children and how this will be done within the Order. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 included clear information about how to communicate the importance of safeguarding children across the OCD Communities and various public interfaces.

Recommendation 11

With consideration to Recommendation 1, the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Provincial should incorporate into the revised policies and procedures document a full and comprehensive text regarding access to advice and support for alleged victims and respondent priests. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 included clear information about access and support for alleged victims and respondent friars.

Recommendation 12

That the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Safeguarding Committee must develop and implement a safeguarding plan, outlining their intention to monitor compliance with the NBSCCCI Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland. This may include guidance on the role of the Local Safeguarding Committee and a commitment to an annual audit. **Implemented:** OCD developed and implemented a Three Year Strategic Plan which was kept under review by the OCD Safeguarding Committee Ireland.

Recommendation 13

With consideration to Recommendation 1, the Discalced Carmelites (OCD) Safeguarding Committee should incorporate, into their revised policies and procedures document, a full and comprehensive text regarding how to implement and monitor the NBSCCCI standards. **Implemented:** The Interim Policy, 2014 included clear information about how to implement and monitor the Standards.

The OCD Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Handbook (2017) replaced the Interim Handbook (2014) and meets the requirements of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016).

The purpose of this second round of Reviews is to assess child-safeguarding practice against the Catholic Church in Ireland's current standards as detailed in *Safeguarding Children - Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*. The Review seeks a level and quality of evidence to provide:

- Public confidence that the Church body is safe for children.
- Affirmation to child safeguarding personnel that they are doing the right things well.
- Confirmation to the Church authority that what they want to be done is in fact being done.
- Independent verification of Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of Self-Audit.
- Opportunities for learning.

Introduction

The Carmelite Order had its origins on Mount Carmel near Haifa in northwest Israel. The mountain was considered holy, and many hermits chose to live on it. Some had stayed on after the Crusades. At their request St Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem gathered a group together and wrote a rule for them. From the 1230's the situation in the Holy Land became more precarious for Westerners. Some of the hermits sought refuge in Europe.

The Carmelites appear in England and France soon after their departure from the Holy Land. They made foundations and began to adapt their life to this new setting becoming more pastorally active. They placed themselves at the service of the Church as one of the Orders of mendicant friars (Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians). Like many Orders they went into decline in the 15th & 16th Century. This led to a reform by St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of Cross. This led to the formation of two of the Carmelite family: Order of Carmelites (O. Carm) and Discalced Carmelites (OCD).

The Discalced Carmelites came to Dublin in 1625 but had to move to Loughrea in 1643. After several unsuccessful attempts they founded a community in Dublin in 1707. They had to move a number of times until 1797, when they founded St. Teresa's, Clarendon Street, Dublin. St Mary's (Donnybrook) was founded in 1875 and in 1884 became the junior college for people considering a Carmelite vocation. Due to increasing numbers the Discalced Carmelites bought a property in Castlemartyr, Co Cork in 1929 and this became the junior college. The college closed in 2003.

In 1927 the Order amalgamated the Irish and English provinces into what is called today the Anglo-Irish Province. In the 1940s members of the Anglo-Irish Province founded houses in the Philippines, Australia and California. The Philippines and California became in time independent provinces of the Order while Australia is a Regional Vicariate.

Further expansion took place with a foundation in Termonbacca, Derry in 1982 and in 1984 the acceptance of the pastoral care of Berkeley Road parish in Dublin, which was handed back to the Archdiocese of Dublin in January 2021.

In 1988 the Superior General asked a number of Irish friars working in different countries to set up a house in Nigeria under his jurisdiction. The Anglo-Irish province was asked to take responsibility for the mission in 1993. Nigeria has progressed well and has 82 members now, 45 of them priests and is now a Vicariate.

The Discalced Carmelite Order consists of 55 provinces in 98 countries and is guided by the Superior General and his Council who are resident in Rome. The day to day running of each province is done by the Provincial and four Councillors. The Provincial is elected for a period of three years and can be re-elected for three more.

The Anglo-Irish Province consists of four areas: Ireland, England, Australia and Nigeria.

The current Provincial, Reverend Jim Noonan, was appointed by the OCD Chapter in May 2023 for a three year period (and can be elected by the OCD Chapter for another three year term). He resides in Dublin. Prior to his appointment there were two previous Provincials since the last Review in 2014:

- Fr Michael McGoldrick – 2014 to 2020
- Fr John Grennan – 2020 to 2023

There are four Community Houses of friars in Ireland each governed by a Local Prior and his council and accountable to the Provincial.

In the past 30 years numbers in Ireland have been diminishing rapidly due to deaths, departures from the Order and fewer vocations.

There are 27 friars (26 priests and 1 brother) in Ireland in 2023 with an average age of 75: one is fully excluded from public ministry and another has restricted ministry; two friars are retired due to age/ poor health and three who are students do part-time ministry.

There are currently four ministry sites associated with four OCD Community Houses: St. Joseph's, Termonbacca in Derry, St. Joseph's, Loughrea, Avila, Donnybrook, and St. Teresa's, Clarendon Street, Dublin. Derry is currently the only site in which there is specific ministry to children and young adults – under the auspices of OCD.

Termonbacca is a Retreat Centre that has a connection with the people of the city. They are a devotional people and the Centre builds on this as well as offering the spirituality of the Carmelite Saints. The Centre is fruitfully used by members of the Cursillo movement and one friar is involved in this. Sr. Claire Crockett, the Derry nun who died in an earthquake in Ecuador in 2015, is remembered in a monthly Mass where prayers are said for official recognition of her holiness. More recently, a person has been employed to specifically promote youth ministry.

St. Joseph's in Loughrea is a public church which serves the public by daily and Sunday Masses as well as a confessional ministry.

Avila is a Spirituality Centre, offering retreats and courses on spirituality, the main focus being the spirituality of the Carmelite saints. There is a community Mass each day and people are welcome to attend, which they do.

St. Teresa's, Clarendon Street, Dublin is a public Church where the chief ministries are the celebration of public Masses and Confessions. The premises are used by groups such as the St Vincent de Paul, AA, Living Water, and the Carmelite Secular Order. Friars help if requested to do so.

Together with the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (the National Board), the reviewer would like to thank the Provincial, Reverend Jim Noonan for his invitation to undertake a Review of child safeguarding arrangements and practices in the Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars Ireland (OCD). The reviewer appreciated the warm welcome and hospitality during visits to Loughrea (24th September 2023), Termonbacca (23rd October 2023) and Avila (11th to 13th December 2023). Everyone the reviewer met with were willing and open to discuss safeguarding practice arrangements in OCD, and share their safeguarding documentation.

The period covered by this Review is from October 2014 to December 2023. All child protection concerns reported to OCD during this time-period, as well as cases reported earlier and still being managed at the time of the Review were examined.

The impact of Covid-19 was taken account of by the reviewer during the completion of this Review. During 2020 and 2021 ministry with children and young people ceased as a result of Covid-19. Post Covid-19 Termonbacca Retreat Centre is the only community to restart youth ministry (Anam Óg Youth Programme for 10 to 14 year olds). Local priors and safeguarding representatives in Avila, St Teresa's and Loughrea at the time of this Review were discussing starting altar serving ministry and children's choirs.

Process of Review

The Review of compliance was measured against the National Board's seven standards, contained in *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*, which is accessible at <https://www.safeguarding.ie/policy-guidance/policy-document>. The Review concentrated on safeguarding arrangements and practice through evaluating written records and meetings with those listed below. The Review also took account of changes and developments within the Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars Ireland since the last Review in October 2014.

In order to assess compliance, the Provincial, Reverend Jim Noonan of the Anglo- Irish Province of the Discalced Carmelite Friars invited the National Board to undertake a review of safeguarding practice in Ireland.

A Memorandum of Understanding and a Data Processing Deed agreement were signed prior to the Review taking place.

The Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars Ireland fieldwork was undertaken between December 11 and 13, 2023.

The following is a list of those with whom the reviewer met or spoke to during the fieldwork for this Review:

- Provincial, Reverend Jim Noonan
- A previous Provincial
- Safeguarding Co-ordinators/Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) past and present
- OCD External Safeguarding Advisor
- The Accredited Children's Safeguarding Trainer
- The Chairperson and members of the OCD Children's Safeguarding Committee Ireland
- Priors from the four OCD Communities
- Local Safeguarding Representatives
- Friars
- Leader of Anam Óg Youth Programme/Volunteers/Parents/Children
- An Internal Monitoring Supervisor (case management)
- A Friar Support Advisor (case management)
- Respondents
- A Tusla representative

STANDARDS

The Standards are a level of practice required to ensure good child safeguarding arrangements. Each standard is self-contained and supported by indicators to evidence if safeguarding arrangements and practice meet the required standard. The National Board has produced detailed Guidance, which is accessible on its website (<https://www.safeguarding.ie/guidance>).

The seven Standards are:

Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Standard 2: Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations

Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant

Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent

Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Standard 7: Quality-Assuring Compliance with the Standards

Standard 1 - Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments

Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. They provide access to good role models whom children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

The OCD Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Handbook (2017) which replaced the Interim Handbook (2014) is comprehensive and meets the requirements of the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland (2016).

All employed safeguarding personnel were appointed through the OCD recruitment and selection process: job description; application; interview; references; vetting; contract of employment; and induction.

Vetting is overseen and centrally co-ordinated by the Provincial and vetting applications for the four Communities are processed by the Archdiocese of Dublin/Western Province Dioceses/ and Northern Dioceses vetting offices as outlined below:

Vetting: ROI

The Archdiocese of Dublin vetting office processes vetting for Avila and St Teresa's and the Western Province Dioceses vetting office processes vetting for Loughrea. Freedom to appoint letters are issued to OCD.

Year	Number
2017	2
2018	24
2019	2
2020	4
2021	18
2022	3
2023	1

Vetting: N.I.

Northern Dioceses vetting office processes vetting for Termonbacca. Freedom to appoint letters are issued to OCD.

Year	Number
2017	1
2021	1
2022	3
2023	5 + 1 being processed at time of Review

Following discussion with the Provincial and Safeguarding Co-ordinator and examination of the electronic vetting database and paper documentation, which is securely held in the Provincial's office (for the four OCD Communities), the reviewer was satisfied with vetting arrangements and that vetting of relevant personnel was up to date (one application was being processed at time of the Review).

The Provincial has appointed a vetting administrator who will support OCD vetting arrangements and undertake other duties required within the OCD safeguarding office.

Guidance is in place for OCD friars who have ministry with children in an external organisation/Church body. The Provincial provided evidence to the reviewer of completed forms about friars involved in ministry with an external organisation e.g. schools.

Procedures for Visiting Clergy or Visiting Persons in Any Form of Consecrated Life Seeking to Minister in the Catholic Church in Ireland are in place. There are also procedures for clergy wishing to minister on a short-term basis or at a single event. The Provincial provided documentation to evidence that these procedures had been implemented across the four OCD Communities. Sign in/out registers are signed by visiting celebrants.

There is guidance in place for external organisations/groups using OCD premises in Avila, St. Teresa's, Loughrea and Termonbacca. Completed documentation from 2017 was provided to the reviewer to support this e.g. for retreats and Christ in Others Group –assisting youth to prayer.

It was positive that a number of schools in Dublin use the Avila Centre and St. Teresa's for Retreats (organised by the schools) who had their own safeguarding policy and insurance cover.

The Provincial confirmed with the reviewer that there were no whistleblowing reports since the last National Board Review in 2014. He also confirmed that no complaints had been received since the last Review in 2014 about safeguarding concerns that are not allegations of abuse.

As part of the Review, the reviewer met with personnel involved in safeguarding. This included the OCD All Safeguarding Committee Ireland members (priors and safeguarding representatives from Avila, St. Teresa's, Loughrea and Termonbacca; a former Safeguarding Coordinator/DLP; an external safeguarding advisor; Termonbacca's Retreat Centre Co-ordinator/leader of Anam Óg Youth Programme (10 to 14 year olds), parents and young people (Anam Óg); an internal monitoring supervisor (case management); and a friar support advisor (case management).

All the above were clear about their roles and responsibilities within their remit to safeguard children and young people. They were able to articulate their knowledge of safe care and the arrangements needed to achieve this; for example, through safe recruitment, volunteer application screening, vetting, training, parental consent, adult supervision ratios, hazard risk assessments, sign-in registers, codes of behaviour for adults and children, display of safeguarding information in OCD premises, and how to respond to and report a concern.

Everyone I met with reported that there are good working relationships across OCD Communities, and were very positive about the support they received from the previous and current Safeguarding Coordinators/DLPs.

Termonbacca Anam Óg Youth Programme (To enable young people to explore their faith, play games and have fun):

The Anam Óg youth programme leader is employed full-time as the Retreat Co-coordinator for Termonbacca and is also one of two safeguarding representatives for the Termonbacca Community. Volunteers involved in Anam Óg had been vetted and completed safeguarding training. The Prior also provides support together with a diocesan priest.

Anam Óg meets two times a month on a Sunday evening in Termonbacca and no other groups meet at the same time. Anam Óg has a flyer which highlights the safeguarding arrangements. The leader openly discussed the culture of safeguarding which was also evident from the discussions with parents, young people and volunteers. The young people had developed their own code of behavior. Guidance is in place for use of technology and young people are not allowed to attend Anam Óg with mobile phones. Young people with additional needs are able to attend the group. All documentation relating to the group is retained in a locked cabinet in the leader's office which was seen by the reviewer. This documentation included: parental information/consent forms/allergy information; vetting and training records; a hazard risk assessment; supervision ratios; incident reports; and attendance register.

The reviewer met with three parents (two are volunteers) and two young people. Both young people spoke with enthusiasm and insight into both the spiritual and fun activities of Anam Óg and had an understanding of safeguarding arrangements. The young people told the reviewer that if they have any worries they would speak to the leader, the Prior or their parents. The parents also talked with enthusiasm about Anam Óg and highlighted the focus on their faith development and support to each other. Anam Óg was described by both parents and young people as a fun place to be on a Sunday evening.

The reviewer also met with the Prior and one of the local safeguarding representatives during the visit to Termonbacca. Both were clear about their safeguarding role and responsibilities and worked well together to ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place for children and young people as evidenced above. They are members of the OCD Safeguarding Committee Ireland and advised that they receive support from the Safeguarding Co-coordinator/DLP. The local committee complete self-audits and keep under review vetting and safeguarding training to ensure it is up to date for friars and volunteers. Minutes of these meetings were made available to the reviewer.

Loughrea Community

The reviewer met with the Prior and two local safeguarding representatives. Although there have been no activities with children and young people since Covid-19, the Prior and LSRs are keen to restart Altar Serving Ministry and the Loughrea Abbey Children's Choir. The reviewer was provided with safeguarding documentation that had been completed from 2017 up to 2020, for example, job description of choir director; vetting and training records; parental/guardian consent forms; a hazard risk assessment; attendance registers; and code of behavior. Only authorized adults were permitted to enter the room for practice and the Abbey gallery when junior choir members were present. There is a laminated poster available for display on the door signed by the Prior which stated the aforementioned. Declarations had also been completed by external groups/organisations (pre Covid-19) using OCD premises to confirm that the group had their own insurance policy and child protection procedures e.g. a traditional music group.

The Prior and LSRs demonstrated a clear knowledge of safeguarding requirements and showed a commitment to ensure children and young people are safe when involved in OCD activities. They advised that they support each other, work well together and are members of the OCD Safeguarding Committee Ireland. The Safeguarding Coordinator/DLP is accessible and supportive to them. They meet formally as a local safeguarding committee and complete self-audits, and ensure vetting and training is completed by friars and volunteers. Minutes of committee meetings were provided to the reviewer.

The reviewer was satisfied that safeguarding arrangements and practice for the activities provided for children and young people in each of the Communities pre and post Covid-19 were compliant with the requirements of standard 1. This was evidenced by examination of documentation from 2017 and discussions with personnel involved in activities with children and young people as outlined above.

This standard is met.

Standard 2 - Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations

Church bodies have clear procedures and guidance on what to do when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare that will ensure there is a prompt response. They also enable the Church to meet all national and international legal and practice requirements and guidance.

OCD have a Safeguarding Co-ordinator who also acts as DLP. The reviewer was satisfied that the DLP is widely identified, so that everyone knows who to refer to if they have safeguarding concerns. The DLP contact details are on the OCD website, displayed in all OCD premises entrances/reception areas which had been updated following the current DLP's appointment in April 2023. A deputy DLP supports the DLP as and when required.

Since the first Review in October 2014, OCD had received four reports of alleged sexual abuse from four separate complainants against two individual friars. Fr. 2 was deceased at the time allegations were made against him.

Table 1 – Allegations of child sexual abuse reported to OCD since October 2014.

Friar	Number of allegations	Gardai notified	Tusla notified	The National Board notified	Appropriate and timely canonical action taken
Fr. 1	2 1	4 days same day	4 days 6 days	4 days 6 days	Timely canonical action was taken. Penal precepts were issued at completion of canonical investigations
Fr. 2	1	6 months 19 days	6 months 22 days	7 months	N/A

Friar 1: had allegations made against him by three complainants. These reports of abuse had timely notifications made to the Gardai, Tusla and the National Board. Also, timely canonical notifications were made and immediate action was taken to remove the friar from public ministry.

Friar 2: was deceased when the report of alleged sexual abuse was received against him. The complainant did not disclose details of the alleged sexual abuse and due to their personal circumstances did not want notifications made to the statutory authorities. The complainant's purpose of making the report was to receive support only. Information about Towards Healing was provided by the DLP and time was given to the complainant to consider next steps. The DLP has maintained contact with the complainant and consulted with the Gardai and Tusla about the case.

The reviewer also examined another case file that did not relate to allegations against OCD friars/personnel. In this case the statutory authorities were involved and OCD ensured advice was provided to the complainant about how to access legal representation together with provision of support.

The case files audited were well organised, and the information was up to date. All files were securely stored and retained in compliance with GDPR requirements.

OCD consult with the National Board and have sought advice and guidance from the National Case Management Committee regarding case management since 2015.

The reviewer met with a representative from Tusla who reported satisfaction that OCD made timely notifications of reports of abuse and shared full information with Tusla. She also was impressed with arrangements to manage, monitor and review respondent friars.

Due to the low number of reports of abuse received by OCD they have had limited contact with the Gardai/PSNI since the last Review in October 2014. The reviewer was satisfied from examination of case files that OCD have shared full information and consulted appropriately with the Gardai regarding the notifications made to them. Since 2014 no formal complaints were made by complainants to the statutory authorities.

The reviewer was satisfied that procedures are in place for responding to child protection suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations. This was based on examination of case files, and discussions with the Provincial, the past and current DLPs and a representative from Tusla.

This standard is met.

Standard 3 - Care and Support for the Complainant

Complainants who have suffered abuse as children receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. They, and their families, are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care.

From the reviewer's examination of case management files and discussion with provincials and DLPs past and present, it was evident that complainants were listened to, taken seriously, treated with respect and received a compassionate response.

Since the last Review three complainants declined support from OCD. One complainant sought support and guidance and received a caring and sensitive response from the DLP.

OCD have a trained support person to provide support as and when required. The DLP can also provide support to complainants.

Information was provided to complainants about Towards Healing and Towards Peace and how to access legal representation. OCD also provided funding for independent counselling for complainants.

OCD also proactively reached out to complainants who initially declined support.

Full information was provided by OCD for all civil proceedings against them and timely settlements were facilitated. Apologies were provided to complainants.

The reviewer was satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place to care and support complainants.

This standard is met.

Standard 4 - Care and Management of the Respondent

The Church authority has in place a fair process for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns. When the threshold for reporting has been reached, a system of support and monitoring for respondents (cleric or religious) is provided.

Three friars have been subject to case management and care since the last Review in 2014. Two of these friars were subject to recommendations made to OCD from the last Review in 2014, which were fully implemented.

The first friar (refer to recommendation 4 above) immediately returned from another jurisdiction and his circumstances were fully reviewed including by CDF. He is currently subject to restricted ministry with adults and has no ministry with children and young people.

The second friar (refer to recommendation 5 above) was returned to full public ministry without restrictions prior to his death following completion of a canonical preliminary investigation, further assessment and consultation with statutory authorities.

The third friar was subject to allegations of sexual abuse by three complainants (refer to Friar 1. table 1, standard 2) He remains out of public ministry.

The two friars currently subject to case management have in place canonical penal precepts/safety plans which were last updated in January 2023, based on up to date assessment of their circumstances. Monitoring visits were completed and monitor panel review meetings held. The frequency of monitor panel review meetings are set based on the current circumstances of the friar and can be chaired by the external monitoring supervisor (DLP) or internal monitoring supervisor. There is also an annual accountability monitor panel meeting to account to the Provincial, chaired by the external monitoring supervisor (DLP). The completed reports and records of the above were in the case file and examined by the reviewer. The Provincial provides an annual statement of compliance to the Archdiocese of Dublin Safeguarding Office regarding the two friars subject to care and management.

There was evidence on case files that canon law requirements were adhered to and timely notifications, reports/votums and updates were provided to the OCD Superior General and Conference for the Doctrine of the Faith/Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The friars subject to care and management were given an opportunity to complete a questionnaire about their experience of the care and management they receive, and to meet with the reviewer. One friar completed a questionnaire and both availed of the opportunity to meet with the reviewer.

The reviewer had separate meetings with the two friars subject to care and management. Both reported that they were given advice about how to obtain legal representation for civil and canon law processes. They were fully aware of their restrictions and attended monitoring and annual accountability panel meetings. The two friars advised that they are satisfied with their support and care.

The reviewer met with the internal monitoring supervisor (to both friars) who was clear about his role and responsibilities. He had full knowledge and understanding of both cases. There was evidence of his monitoring visits/reviews and records of these on case files, which are considered at the annual accountability monitor panel meeting, which he attended. He advised the reviewer that support is available to him from the Provincial, the local priors and DLP. The internal monitoring supervisor had completed appropriate training. The reviewer suggested to the DLP that dates should be set ahead with the internal monitoring supervisor for supervision/support. The DLP agreed to do this.

The reviewer also met with the friar support advisor (to both friars) who was clear about his role and responsibilities and aware of the circumstances of the friars. He attended monitor panel review meetings and the annual accountability monitoring panel meeting. He had completed records of his contacts, which were placed on the case file. The friar support advisor advised that support is available from the Provincial, local priors and DLP and had completed appropriate training. The reviewer suggested to the DLP that dates should be set ahead with the friar support advisor for supervision/support. The DLP agreed to do this.

The reviewer was satisfied that robust arrangements are in place for the care and management of respondents.

This standard is met.

Standard 5 - Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe

Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children.

The reviewer was provided with annual training plans together with training activity from 2017.

OCD Training delivered

Year	Training Module	Numbers
2023	Full Day	1
2022	Refresher	6
2021	Refresher (2)	23
2020	-	-
2019	Full Day	6
2018	Mandated Persons (2)	18
	Full Day (3)	36
2017	Full Day (2)	11
	Info. Session	3

The Provincial advised the reviewer that he is actively progressing with the Carmelites O.Carm to deliver accredited safeguarding training for OCD as the current Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP is not an accredited trainer.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP maintains a central training register for the four OCD Communities. Training documentation was provided to the reviewer that evidenced one day/refresher safeguarding training was delivered to friars, safeguarding personnel and volunteers. Attendance registers and evaluations were completed.

The next planned safeguarding training is to be delivered in March 2024. If training is required before this the previous Safeguarding Co-ordinator is available to facilitate this.

All friars have been provided with child safeguarding policy and procedures and have signed a declaration/agreement to abide by safeguarding policies and procedures and that they have read and understood these. Evidence of signed declarations were provided to the reviewer.

Personnel the reviewer met with confirmed that support is available to them from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP and from the National Board.

The OCD Irish Region Chapter received training delivered by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP about – the law - church and state; overview of safeguarding in OCD; online child abuse/pornography – in canon and civil law.

The reviewer was satisfied that arrangements are in place for training and support for keeping children safe.

This standard is met

Standard 6 - Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message

Church bodies appropriately communicate the Church's child safeguarding message.

As agreed with the National Board promotion of this Review was publicised on the OCD website. The OCD website has a dedicated Safeguarding section with necessary information about what should be done when anybody has a concern.

Communicating the safeguarding message is part of the OCD strategic three year and annual plans including the plan for 2023.

The OCD Child Safeguarding Policy Statement was updated in July 2023 and is compliant with the Children First Act 2015. All entrance/reception areas of OCD Community premises visited by the reviewer had the OCD Child Safeguarding Policy Statement displayed with up to date DLP and statutory authority details. A summary leaflet of the Policy and Standards, 2016 was also available in all OCD entrances/reception areas visited by the reviewer.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinators/DLPs past and current have completed support visits to local priors and safeguarding representatives.

A "Safe and Sound in the Catholic Church— if you are scared or have any worries please contact You have a right to be safe" poster is available and is child friendly. A "No Bullying/Bully Free Zone/Bullying can be Stopped" poster is available for display.

In May each year OCD communicates the children's safeguarding message on a designated Sunday/weekend e.g. at Mass, retreats, prayer meetings. OCD give a message that *"children have a right to be part of our Church and to feel safe in Church contexts so they can grow up believing in God's love. Children are entitled to their childhood. All of us in the church, all the People of God, are responsible for the well-being and safety of children. All of us want children to grow up without their lives being tainted by a negative experience of adults in our Church, or elsewhere."* Also during the designated safeguarding Sunday/weekend the *Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016* is promoted and that all associated with OCD are bound to observe this Policy and the OCD Child Safeguarding Policy Statement. Everyone is encouraged to check the Statement displayed in all OCD premises so as to know who to contact about concerns regarding the safety of a child. Additionally OCD have also used Safeguarding Sunday/weekend to seek feedback from adults and young people about "what do you think we do well about safeguarding now?" and what recommendations have you to offer to improve on this?"

Safeguarding information can be translated into other languages based on need.

The Reviewer was satisfied that arrangements are in place to communicate the OCD safeguarding message.

This standard is met

Standard 7 - Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards

The Church body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This action plan is reviewed annually. The Church body only has responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on compliance with the indicators under each standard that apply to it, depending on its ministry.

The reviewer was satisfied that the OCD Safeguarding Committee Ireland (SCI) is appropriately constituted. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator /DLP chairs the meeting and members include the Provincial, priors and safeguarding committee members (lay persons) from the four OCD Communities. The OCD Safeguarding Committee Ireland members had received a letter of appointment for three years (and can be reappointed following this period) and lay members had signed a confidentiality declaration.

The reviewer was kindly invited to attend the SCI held on the 12th December 2023 which was the final meeting chaired by the outgoing Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP. There was a set agenda and progress with actions of the one year plan (2023) were reviewed. Dates were set for the community priors and LSR's to complete self-audits for 2023 at their local safeguarding committee meeting in January 2024. The SCI meets mid-year to review progress with the annual action plan. The Provincial provided a summary of ongoing involvement with friars subject to case management. The chairperson competently chaired the meeting and enabled discussion and participation of all members.

The reviewer examined self- audit reports (standards 1, 5, 6 and 7) and case management reports (standards 2, 3 and 4) from 2017, which were completed by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP. Provincials had submitted letters to the National Board to confirm these reports had been completed and recommendations for action were included in the safeguarding strategy/plan.

The OCD three year Strategic Plan for Safeguarding, 2016 -2019 replaced the 2015- 2018 Plan. The reason for an updated Plan was because OCD signed up to the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church 2016, the overarching policy on Safeguarding Children for all bodies in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Following 2019 one-year action plans up to 2023 were developed and implemented by OCD. These plans were provided to the reviewer for examination. The actions identified from analysis of self-audits were included in these. The reviewer commends the commitment of OCD Communities safeguarding representatives for the completion of self-audits, development of plans and progression of actions.

The reviewer was provided with information about current mandated persons, which is kept under review and up to date by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/DLP and includes all friars and safeguarding personnel.

Since 2014 the external OCD Safeguarding manager had oversight of the development and functioning of the safeguarding structure, at times acting as DLP. They provided support and mentoring to OCD safeguarding personnel. Since 2020 the role evolved into an external safeguarding advisor on a need basis, now focused on advice/guidance regarding safeguarding systems/processes and case management.

The current Safeguarding Coordinator/DLP commenced his role in April 2023 and has developed a full understanding of the various roles and responsibilities of OCD. The outgoing Safeguarding Coordinator/DLP had completed a comprehensive handover/induction/mentoring process with him and he also received support from the OCD external safeguarding advisor. He has a signed contract of employment for 8 hours per month.

The Safeguarding Co-coordinator/DLP is accountable to the Provincial who also provides support to him. The reviewer suggested that the Provincial should schedule dates ahead to meet with the Safeguarding Coordinator/DLP to discuss progress with work and provide support. The Provincial agreed to do this. The DLP also attends regular DLP meetings with members from other Orders every three months. Safeguarding Coordinators/DLPs past and present reported good and supportive working relationships in OCD.

The reviewer was satisfied that arrangements are in place to quality assure compliance with the seven standards.

This standard is met.

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Conclusion

The reviewer was assured regarding the Order of Discalced Carmelite Friars Ireland compliance with Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016. OCD has developed and strengthened safeguarding arrangements and practice since the last Review.

OCD personnel the reviewer met with had a clear understanding about their safeguarding role and responsibilities and are committed to work together to safeguard children. Everyone reported that the Provincials, Safeguarding Co-ordinators/DLPs past and present were accessible, supportive and followed up any queries they had.

The reviewer was encouraged by discussions with the Provincial, local priors and safeguarding representatives about the potential to resume altar serving ministry and children's choirs. The reviewer was impressed with the safeguarding arrangements in place for the Anam Óg Youth Programme in Termonbacca.

Everyone is to be commended under the leadership of the current and previous Provincials for their commitment and care to keep children and young people safe while involved in OCD ministries.