



Safeguarding Development Newsletter

(Issue 13 – Feb. 2020)



For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven....

(Eccles. 3:1)

Safeguarding Development Group Update

A range of topics was considered 25 January last that are now briefly profiled below.

Network 'Draft Programme' (28 March)

In a new departure the person invited to give the 'Keynote Address' joined the meeting for about an hour to consider possible themes and some related questions worth exploring. Some examples included:

- ✚ *What would safeguarding formation for a community of faith look like?*
- ✚ *Does the absence of children in church create sadness and undermine the possibilities that safeguarding initiatives are trying to open-up?*
- ✚ *Can the impact of safeguarding go beyond information to transformation: a head to heart journey?*

Other practical decisions and details concerning the day are reflected in the 'Draft Programme' (p.4).

Local Audits – Summary Report

All church locations were audited between Oct. – Dec. 2019 and each report individually and collectively reviewed.

Different levels of practice were highlighted, and the following observations made:

- *The maintenance of records was much improved and yet, better co-ordination at local level would make information much easier to access (e.g. training and/or vetting renewals).*
- *Should a formal offer of admin assistance be made to LSGs in completing Vetting Applications across the Province?*
- *Most practice areas needing attention are linked to Goal 4 – Promoting Safe Environments and therefore, should be followed-up in the next Safeguarding Plan.*

The benefits of completing such an Audit was seen in the exercise being completed on a

cyclical basis, possibly in advance of any independent review by the NBSCCCI. Otherwise, local ownership of developing safeguarding practices could be undermined and the completion of annual 'Progress Reports' devalued.

More is to be said about the findings 28 March.

Safeguarding Report 2017 – 2019

As the first 3-year plan was now complete a draft report of achievements was reviewed based on Standard 1 – Creating & Maintaining Safe Environment, Standard 5 – Training & Support for Keeping Children Safe, Standard 6 – Communication the Safeguarding Message and Standard 7 – Quality Assuring Compliance.

With some minor amendments, the draft report was recommended for approval by the Provincial Council in February.

Safeguarding Development Plan '20 – '22

With an eye to the next three years a draft plan was under consideration. The findings of the Audits helped to inform some proposed actions. Therefore, it was accepted that the document did not need to be circulated to LSGs for comments but amended and submitted to the Provincial Council for approval in February.

Plan to be launched at Safeguarding Network.

New Child Safeguarding Statement

Following discussion with Tusla – The Child and Family Agency, new guidance was received from the National Board regarding publicly displayed 'Child Safeguarding Statements'. Some misgivings were expressed about the new emphasis on 'risk management'. It was agreed to seek further advice on the matter before taking any action at Provincial and/or local level.

Progress Reports (May '19 – 'April '20)

Last year's template was reviewed page by page and some changes suggested. Hopefully, these will improve the clarity and flow of the information being requested.

To be finalised and circulated 28 March 2020.

Appointment of Garda Vetting Liaison Person for the Province

See Provincial's letter below explaining new development regarding the administration and co-ordination of Garda Vetting.

*"Dear Priors,
In compliance with the Charity Regulator's Governance Code for all Charities and on legal advice relating to same, last week, the Council approved and assigned the role of Garda Vetting Liaison Person for the Province to Orla Lalor in Ballyboden.*

The purpose of the role is to centralise Vetting for Friars, Staff and Volunteers through the Provincial Office and thereby comply with the new legislation that requires the Order to hold a central database for Vetting for all members.

*We would be very grateful if you would send us contact details (email) of the person who handles vetting in your community and ask them to forward copies of Vetting Forms and dates of renewal to **Orla Lalor, GVLP, St. Augustine's Ballyboden, Dublin 16, D16YN32.** We would also be grateful if you could forward the contact details of the Diocesan Garda Vetting Representative in your area so Orla can liaise directly with them.*

All information will be held in the strictest confidence in line with National Vetting Board and GDPR requirements. From your perspective, nothing changes other than forms sent directly to the Diocese, will now be sent directly to Orla in Ballyboden who will process them on your behalf with your local Vetting / Diocesan rep.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Orla on 01-4241000 or email vetting@augustinians.ie.

*I thank you for your cooperation in this matter.
Yours sincerely,"*

John Hennebery OA

Audit Reports



Each 'Progress Report' contains an 'Action Plan' for the year ahead. Completing the Audit exercise between Oct. – Dec. 2019 was to allow for any practical follow-up actions to be taken on board and addressed at local level, insofar as possible, before the next Progress Report is completed for submission by mid-May. That deadline will allow the SDG members to consider matters at its pre-summer meeting 23 May and thereby, keep on top of its own responsibilities. Forward planning keeps us focussed on the target.



Shall your LSG be the tortoise or the hare?
Festina lente; hasten slowly and reach the goal!



Invitation

OSA Safeguarding Network

Horse & Jockey Hotel, Co. Tipperary.

(10.00am - 3.30pm) Saturday, 28 March 2020.

All Local Safeguarding Group Members will meet SDG Members to share experiences and discuss in the round the current Safeguarding challenges we face and our future hopes for the Province.

Title: 2020 VISION

The Keynote Address '*Finding Our Safeguarding Confidence*' will be given by Saoirse Fox, Director of Safeguarding, Jesuits Ireland.

Other inputs will include:

- *Overview of Local Audits & Group Discussion.*
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- *What Could Your Database Look Like?*
- *Local Safeguarding Progress Report '19 – '20.*
- *OSA Website: Safeguarding Resources.*
- *Safeguarding Development Plan '20 – '22:
What has been achieved?
What will be done?*

Fr. John Hennebry (Provincial) will offer his reflections on where we find ourselves on the Safeguarding journey and whither bound.

