

**Private and Confidential**

**Review of Safeguarding Practice**

in the

**Diocese of Kilmore**

undertaken by

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church**

**(NBSCCC)**

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Bishop of Kilmore**

**November 2010**

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## **Background**

This report examines current practice with regard to the safeguarding of children in the Diocese of Kilmore. It is based on the examination of all existing case files, supporting documentation supplied by the bishop, guidance and policy documents produced by the diocese itself and a series of interviews with diocesan safeguarding staff, including Bishop O'Reilly himself.

The overall view of current practice is that it is of a consistently high standard. In many respects, the Diocese of Kilmore may be viewed as a model of best practice within the Church in this critical area. To a significant extent, this is seen as a consequence of the personal commitment and diligence of Bishop O'Reilly who demonstrated a willingness to lead others and to address safeguarding concerns when they arose. For this he should be commended.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Safeguarding Practice within the Diocese of Kilmore* undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church (NBSCCC) 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 diocese. NBSCCC do not have powers of compellability and therefore sharing of data has been done on the basis of trust. The NBSCCC believes that all relevant documentation for these cases was passed to the reviewers. This has been confirmed by the diocese.

The bishop and his team has demonstrated their commitment to achieving best practice in safeguarding by inviting the NBSCCC to undertake this review. The purpose of the review is set out within the terms of reference that are appended to this report. It seeks to examine how practice conforms to expected standards in the Church at the time an allegation was received. It also seeks to confirm that all known allegations have been reported to the statutory authorities.

It is an expectation held by the National Board that key findings from the review will be shared widely so that public awareness of what is in place and also what is planned may be increased and with it, confidence that the Church is taking appropriate steps to safeguard children. It is also an expectation of NBSCCC that a time bound action plan is prepared based on the recommendations made in this review.

### ***For Clarification –***

***The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church, NBSCCC, National Board, National Office - all these terms are synonymous with each other and refer to the same entity.***

***Also the term Designated Person is interchangeable with that of Designated Officer or Delegate. A precise definition of the content of the role may be found on Page 55 of Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance document.***

## **Introduction**

The Diocese of Kilmore is part of the Armagh Province. It borders with the dioceses of Clogher, Meath, and Ardagh/Clonmacnois. It is amongst the smallest on the island with a total of thirty six parishes, ninety five churches and a Catholic population of approximately fifty seven thousand. Geographically, it includes almost all of county Cavan and a portion of counties Leitrim, Fermanagh, Meath and Sligo. The Bishop of the diocese is the Most Reverend Leo O'Reilly DD. He was installed on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1998. Bishop O'Reilly has a total of approximately ninety priests active within his diocese. He also has one male and six female religious orders resident within his diocese. The male order is the Norbertines Canons based at Kilnacrott Abbey. This is the order to which a notorious priest offender belonged, Fr. Brendan Smyth, who was a prolific abuser of young and vulnerable children. His case has attracted significant media attention even though he died in prison in 1997.

### **(a) Purpose:**

The purpose of the review is to examine current safeguarding practice within the diocese and to form a view of current risk. To achieve this, all cases of living priests incardinated into the diocese and against whom a credible allegation had been made, were read. In addition the diocesan papers relating to a serial clerical offender, (though not a priest of the diocese) were also read. The Terms of Reference of the review were agreed by the Irish Bishops Conference when they met in June of 2010. They had also been agreed by the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union. A copy of these was supplied to the diocese some weeks prior to the review commencing. Bishop O'Reilly was also supplied with documentation to support the review including a 'Step Guide' along with methodology and procedural notes. Prior to the review beginning, Bishop O'Reilly was asked to sign a revised Memorandum of Understanding which nominated the National Board as a data processor for his safeguarding data. In this way, the provisions of the Data Protection legislation applicable in the jurisdiction of the Republic of Ireland were met with regard to the review process.

Specifically, the terms of reference for the review state the following:-

*'To ascertain the full extent of all complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese'.*

**(b) Co-operation with diocese and support for the reviewer.**

The review was afforded the full support of the diocese in all regards. It is believed that all documentation relevant to the review was made available to be read, assessed and commented upon. A private room was available for the review fieldwork within Bishop O'Reilly's house. Selected safeguarding personnel drawn from across the diocese were interviewed and all participated freely in the process. Bishop O'Reilly made himself available for interview by the review team and took part in a shared, open discussion with his staff. It is the view of the reviewer that all the personnel involved should be commended for their support of the process.

## **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*. This guidance was launched in February 2009 and was endorsed and adopted by all the Church authorities who minister on the island of Ireland, including the Diocese of Kilmore.

### **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.*

#### **Policy and Procedures**

The review was provided with a copy of the *Policy Handbook 2009* entitled *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Kilmore*. This document is described as incorporating what is seen as best practice in the leading civil policy documents of *Children First* and *Cooperating to Safeguard Children*, and the Church guidance of *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*. Although concise, it does broadly achieve this. Importantly, what it does do is to commit the diocese to full compliance with civil and Church guidance in all respects.

The content of the Policy Handbook states the guiding principles upon which the policies are based. It presents the core policies in an accessible and easily understood form. All are compliant with the standards contained in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*.

The diocesan policies and the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document have been distributed widely throughout the diocese. Efforts have been made to ensure that the guidance is not only received, but is also read and actively applied to present and future practice.

The task of safeguarding children can be conceptualised as involving two distinct processes, namely the prevention of abuse and the protection of children when abuse has or is believed to be likely to occur. Policies are required to address both of these for children and vulnerable young people to be fully safeguarded.

Through interview with parish safeguarding representatives, it is clear that at this foundation level within parishes, there is an appreciation of ensuring that both the preventive and protective elements are addressed. In particular, the work of the two

safeguarding trainers is to be commended. They have helped to train, recruit and encourage a strong safeguarding structure at the level of the parish in the diocese.

The diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee is active and competent in the area of policy development and training. They have produced an impressive range of guidance documents that have been disseminated across the diocese. All are compliant with Church guidance.

**Standard 2**

**Table of the incidence of Safeguarding allegations received  
within the Diocese of Kilmore  
from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to November 2010**

<b>1</b>	<b>Number of priests incardinated into the Diocese of Kilmore against whom an allegation or allegations have been made since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 and up to the date of the Review</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Number of allegations reported to An Garda Síochána involving priests of the diocese since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 and up to the date of the Review</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Number of allegations reported to the HSE (or to the Health Boards which preceded the setting up of the HSE) involving priests of the diocese since 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 and up to the date of the Review</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Number of priests of the diocese against whom an allegation has been made and who were living at the date of the Review</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Number of priests against whom an allegation has been made and who are deceased</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Number of priests against whom an allegation has been made and who are “Out of Ministry” or who have left the priesthood</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Number of priests of the diocese who have been convicted of having committed an offence against a child or a young person since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 up to the date of the Review</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Number of priests against whom an allegation was made and who are in ministry or retired.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Number of priests who are not of the diocese but who reside within it, and who are known to be the subject of an allegation arising from their past ministry.</b>	<b>1</b>

*NB. The allegations above do not include any that relate to religious priests that have resided in the diocese but are not incardinated into the diocese.*

***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.*

A total of twenty one case files were made available for review. Only a few fell within the terms of reference for the review but all were read by the reviewer including the papers relating to a religious priest, Fr. Brendan Smyth, who was a serial offender. His case, as already noted, has commanded considerable public interest and it is for this reason that it is commented upon within the review but it is not included in the statistical analysis of cases.



It should be noted that the response made to this priest was considered by the reviewer to be inadequate as it was felt to display a disregard for the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable young people. Although this priest was removed from ministry initially, he was later returned some years later. His priestly faculties continued to be renewed each year until he was again the focus of new allegations of abuse which eventually led to his conviction and imprisonment. It should be noted that none of this can be attributed in any way to the present bishop or to anyone currently in a safeguarding role in the diocese. However, it represents important learning for all those involved in safeguarding in the Church as to the tragic consequences of failing to recognise the risks posed by those that habitually seek to harm children and young people. Again it should be noted that this priest was not an incardinated priest of the diocese. He was a member of a religious order who ministered within the diocese.

Standard 2 relates to that part of safeguarding practice which may be described as protection. It involves ensuring that sound policies are in place which requires allegations, suspicions and concerns to be responded to in a timely way. This includes full reporting to the civil authorities and precautionary management of any potential risks.

With regard to policy, the diocese has the necessary framework in place and this is complied with when concerns arise. The review of cases showed that since the arrival of Bishop O'Reilly and the development of a safeguarding structure within the diocese, policy and practice has complied with civil and Church guidance.

It is clear from the review of cases that cumulative learning and experience have helped to develop practice and decision making in the diocese. There were no cases of a failure to report and address matters when they came to light. There was also a strong pastoral element in the way in which Bishop O'Reilly made himself available to those who had been harmed or had been accused.

There is also firmness and adherence to canonical requirements. This is illustrated by the fact that the diocese's most recent case, which resulted in a priest being charged and convicted of indecently assaulting a young boy, laicisation has already been applied for and granted for the perpetrator, who is still in prison.

The Advisory Committee for the diocese is shared with their two neighbours, Clogher and Ardagh/Clonmacnois. Bishop O'Reilly expressed confidence and appreciation in the operation of this body. Although not interviewed within the review, there was nothing within the case files to suggest that they offered anything other than sound advice to Bishop O'Reilly when he calls upon them.

**Recommendation 1:**

**There is a strong argument to support the view that the role of designated person is best undertaken by a lay person. Where there is a deputy designated person, that role may be filled by a priest. However, because the designated person has to undertake tasks that involve speaking to colleague priests about allegations that have arisen against them, it is felt that a lay person would be best suited to this role. It is therefore recommended that Bishop O'Reilly reviews the post of designated person.**

**Recommendation 2:**

**Bishop O'Reilly must ensure the case file template, recommended by NBSCCC continues to be used for all new safeguarding cases and that existing files in loose leaf format be held in binders for greater security.**

### **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.*

The diocese has sought to develop the effectiveness of its safeguarding practice through the use of training. It sent volunteers on the Church sponsored *Keeping Safe* programmes that were run in 2005. More recently, it has been actively engaged with and been supportive of the development of training modules aimed at implementing the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* across the dioceses. This openness to learn stands very much to their credit. It has also helped to create a culture within the diocese which actively seeks to build on previous experience in a positive way. For example, all parish safeguarding representatives are appointed for a three year term of office. After this, they may stand down if they wish. Of the fifty two parish safeguarding representatives who are in post, only a minority sought to leave. Most agreed to renew their commitment for a further term.

A contributing factor here is the excellent support that they receive from the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator in the diocese. They are regularly corresponded with receiving briefings on what has happened and is planned with regard to safeguarding in the diocese. They greatly value these communications and the times when they can meet and share with each other their experiences.

Each parish representative is a part of their parish council. Each parish has its own recruitment committee and templates have been produced to facilitate their functioning.

At the level of the diocese, the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee is fully staffed and operates well. There are two diocesan delegates, both priests who were appointed to the posts by Bishop O'Reilly.

The contribution of Bishop O'Reilly to safeguarding in the diocese is to be noted. He provides leadership and clear support for all those involved.

#### **Standard 4**

##### ***Training and Education***

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

It has already been stated that training and education is seen as a priority for the diocese.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee has set as one of its key objectives the implementation of a new training plan for safeguarding personnel in parishes in the diocese over the next three years. The NBSCCC has developed a new template for training plans which will assist the committee in its presentation of this and future plans. It is worth noting that whenever training is offered by the National Board in any aspect of safeguarding, the Diocese of Kilmore is always well represented. Bishop O'Reilly himself has attended several courses provided by the National Office and participated fully in them. This provides an excellent example for his staff and indeed for his fellow bishops.

A previous reliance upon external providers for training is now being actively reviewed and reassessed by the diocese. This is to be encouraged from a number of respects, not least of which is finance.

##### **Recommendation 3:**

**The Training Co-ordinator in consultation with the Safeguarding Committee should use the new NBSCCC template in the presentation of future training plans for the diocese.**

## **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.*

A colourful and informative two page newsletter was made available to the review as an example of the attempts made by the diocese to spread the safeguarding message. It is impressive and carries some strong messages to all in the diocese about how seriously the matter of safeguarding children is viewed.

There is evidence to confirm that the communication of key messages is actively considered and addressed within the diocese. Essential contact numbers are available at the back of churches. Safeguarding volunteers are regularly brought together for briefings and training. Bishop O'Reilly meets with his core team frequently and there is a sense that all are aware of what their role is and where boundaries lie with others in the structure.

### **Recommendation 4:**

**The Safeguarding Committee should consider planning a diocesan safeguarding conference for all those involved in safeguarding children. The purpose is to communicate the diocesan policy, procedures and the safeguarding structure.**

## **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.*

Decision making in the field of safeguarding children can be challenging. It is important that those who are called upon to exercise it have access to good advice and support. The advice provided should be of the highest quality and should reflect best practice in safeguarding children. This should not be confused with advice provided by other professionals which reflects their expertise but may not represent good child safeguarding practice.

Evidence within case files reflects a willingness on the part of the diocese to seek advice from the National Office for Safeguarding Children and others within the HSE. This is to be encouraged as these are two bodies that have safeguarding professional expertise directly relevant to a Church setting. Others have a valid contribution to make which reflects their professional training but this may not adequately reflect good safeguarding practice.

Again, Bishop O'Reilly has led by his example. He has regularly sought advice on challenging issues that have arisen in his cases. This is to be commended.

## **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.*

The *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document which was launched in February 2009 contains a self audit checklist in Section 2. The purpose of that document is to encourage a process of monitoring of implementation of practice within the Church. All Church authorities should seek to regularly review compliance with policy and adherence to procedures across the diocese. This has a positive aim in that it seeks to identify, address and eliminate any deficits that exist in regard to safeguarding practice.

It is the responsibility of the bishop of the diocese to ensure that all safeguarding matters are adequately dealt with. He will seek to create a framework within the diocese for this to happen and delegate accordingly specific tasks within that framework. The need to ensure that practice is monitored is important.

The monitoring of practice within the Diocese of Kilmore has not been fully implemented yet. To date emphasis has been placed on structure and ensuring gaps have been filled. The next stage is to look at practice and consider the adequacy of responses made to concerns against the agreed procedures. This review is an important step towards meeting that objective. Specific plans for meeting it should be formulated and included in the action plan that will be drawn up following the review, to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations contained within it.

### **Recommendation 5:**

**Bishop O'Reilly must ensure that the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee build on its work of auditing safeguarding practice throughout the diocese, using the self audit tool of the NBSCCC and forward an annual report to NBSCCC on its findings.**

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of the review was to confirm the adequacy of current practice in respect of the safeguarding of children in the Diocese of Kilmore and to form a view of the level of current risk that may exist. It is gratifying to report that the review has shown that practice is generally of a high standard. There were no case examples of poor practice with the exception of those that relate to concerns which emerged prior to the arrival of the present bishop, the development of his safeguarding team, and the adoption of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance*. All who are involved are to be commended. In many ways, they provide an excellent example for other Church authorities to follow. Through their commitment to the review process they have shown an openness to receive constructive criticism aimed at enhancing their present and future practice.

Some of the most notable features of practice within Kilmore were the enthusiasm and commitment of staff and volunteers. They wanted to improve and to achieve best practice for the sake of vulnerable children. Particular praise must be paid to the Bishop of Kilmore, Most Reverend Leo O'Reilly DD. He provides direction for his staff and constantly supports and encourages them. His approach is an excellent example for others to follow.

These are recommendations that the review would seek to make. The first relates to the position of Diocesan Delegate.

There is a strong argument to support the view that this role is best undertaken by a lay person. Where there is a deputy delegate, that role may be filled by a priest. However, because the delegate has to undertake tasks that involve speaking to colleague priests about allegations that have arisen against them, it is felt that a lay person would be best suited to this role.

The ideal candidate is someone who has the required professional experience of interviewing within a safeguarding context. The possibility of a person filling this role on a shared basis with other dioceses, may allow for a fee to be paid. We would recommend that this possibility should be explored.

A second recommendation relates to the use of the case file template advocated by the National Office for new files. This provides structure and facilitates easier access to key information in files than the present system. It would also eliminate the loose leaf system that gives rise to the risk of papers being lost or mislaid.

The third recommendation relates to the formulation of a training plan. The diocesan Safeguarding Committee has done very good work in implementing their first training plan and preparing a new plan for the years ahead. It is recommended that they adopt the new template for training plans prepared by the NBSCCC which draws attention to the specific training needs of individuals in key roles in the diocese as well as specific groups such as parish representatives.



The fourth recommendation relates to the development of self monitoring or auditing in the diocese. The diocese has begun to use the tool in section 2 of the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document. This should be applied on an annual basis.

The fifth recommendation would be the convening of a Diocesan Safeguarding Conference where all those engaged in supporting or delivering safeguarding, would meet and a programme agreed and presented. This could become an annual event and should involve an element of celebration for the work undertaken.

In conclusion, The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church would like to thank Bishop O'Reilly, his staff and all the volunteers who contributed and who gave of their time so generously. It made the task of undertaking this review a very pleasant and valuable experience for the reviewer.

## **Recommendations**

**It is recommended that:-**

- 1. There is a strong argument to support the view that the role of designated person is best undertaken by a lay person. Where there is a deputy designated person, that role may be filled by a priest. However, because the designated person has to undertake tasks that involve speaking to colleague priests about allegations that have arisen against them, it is felt that a lay person would be best suited to this role. It is therefore recommended that Bishop O'Reilly reviews the post of designated person.**
- 2. Bishop O'Reilly must ensure the case file template, recommended by NBSCCC continues to be used for all new safeguarding cases and that existing files in loose leaf format be held in binders for greater security.**
- 3. The Training Co-ordinator in consultation with the Safeguarding Committee should use the new NBSCCC template in the presentation of future training plans for the diocese.**
- 4. The Safeguarding Committee should consider planning a diocesan safeguarding conference for all those involved in safeguarding children. The purpose is to communicate the diocesan policy, procedures and the safeguarding structure.**
- 5. Bishop O'Reilly must ensure that the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee build on its work of auditing safeguarding practice throughout the diocese, using the self audit tool of the NBSCCC and forward an annual report to NBSCCC on its findings.**

## **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 diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese.
  
2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the diocese.
  
3. To ascertain all of the cases during the relevant period in which the diocese:
  - 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 diocese.
  
4. To consider and report on the following matters:
  - Child safeguarding policies and guidance materials currently in use in the diocese and an evaluation of their application;
  - Communication by the diocese with the Civil Authorities;
  - Current risks and their management.

## **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 1990<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

**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 1<sup>st</sup> January 1975 to November 2010 and must be selected randomly in the presence of an independent observer.

**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.