



NCSC

National Catholic
Safeguarding Commission

**Annual Report
2020**



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Safeguarding does not bring rewards just new beginnings to improve on what has taken place beforehand and an assurance that what we have done is for the good of all to protect children and adults at risk.

Chris Pearson

Chair NCSC,
November 2015 – January 2021



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Section one

Foreword by
Rachel O'Driscoll

Foreword

Rachel O'Driscoll
Lay Vice Chair, NCSC

I am delighted to present the National Catholic Safeguarding Committee's Annual Report for 2020.

Due to the implementation of the new safeguarding structures and processes in the Catholic Church in England and Wales, this will be the NCSC's last Annual Report.

This, accordingly, should have been Chris Pearson's final report as Chair of the NCSC, but, very sadly, Chris passed away in January 2021 following a short illness. The Church owes a huge debt to Chris, who chaired the NCSC from 2015 and was previously a member of the Commission. Chris was unstinting in giving of his time and skills in the service of protecting those at risk of abuse. During 2020, in addition to his NCSC-focussed activity, from May to September 2020 Chris also served as the lay representative on the Church's high-level safeguarding committee supporting the work of the independent review into 'Safeguarding Structures and Arrangements within the Catholic

Church in England and Wales' (the Elliott review). In whatever forum you encountered him, Chris' passion for safeguarding and protection for all within the Catholic Church and beyond was both clear and inspiring. It was truly a privilege to know and work with him and to see how effectively he translated his strong faith into purposeful action for the most vulnerable amongst us. As I said at the time of his death, we can all learn much from Chris' approach and his continuing legacy must be an unwavering focus within the Church, at every level, on ensuring that everything possible is done to protect children and adults at risk.

The National Catholic Safeguarding Commission was established in 2008 in the wake of the Cumberlege report - 'Safeguarding with Confidence: Keeping Children and Vulnerable Adults Safe in the Catholic Church' - as the body responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Church's safeguarding policy and for monitoring compliance. Together with an independent lay Chair, the Commission included other lay members (as well as representatives from the Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious); the Commission's composition was designed to provide, in the words of the Cumberlege Report, 'independence that is credible' and it is heartening to know that independence is a keynote of the incoming CSSA Board.



It is worth briefly highlighting a few of the most significant achievements of the NCSC and CSAS over the last twelve years, which include:

- The establishment of the **Survivor Advisory Panel** (the SAP) in January 2016: the SAP has ensured that the Commission has been provided with advice from a survivor perspective and this has, valuably, informed the work of the NCSC.
- The establishment of the **Safe Spaces** initiative (the free telephone helpline for victims and survivors), which is reported on more fully in the section of report detailing NCSC developments during 2020.
- The development and subsequent review of a **National Safeguarding Training Programme**, now supported by a National Catholic Safeguarding Training Coordinator able to ensure that the Programme is subject to ongoing review and update.
- The on-going system of reviewing **national safeguarding policies and procedures** so that they remain comprehensive, contemporary and relevant and comply with best practice.
- The development of a **Quality Assurance Framework** as a tool both to support Safeguarding Commissions in the measurement of quality, standards and delivery of safeguarding services, and for use in conducting quality assurance and audit exercises.
- A suite of **advice leaflets** targeted at different audiences, including the SAP-produced survivors' leaflet for victims and survivors of abuse.
- Improvements to the **annual reporting dataset** to include, for instance, data on the age at which abuse was suffered.
- The emphasis placed on **building improved communication**, through, amongst other things, NCSC members 'linking' with Safeguarding Commissions to promote good communication to ensure the reflection of strategy in practice and the co-option of a Safeguarding Coordinator as a member of the Commission.

A consistent frustration for the NCSC has, however, been the inability to insist that national advice and guidance be followed. This frustration was inherent in the Commission's approval of the final recommendations of the Elliott Report, which argued for the replacement of the NCSC and the CSAS by the Catholic Standards Safeguarding Agency (the CSSA), a body with regulatory rather than advisory powers. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the CSSA and its newly appointed Board well in its vital role of ensuring that children and adults at risk are protected from harm and that there is no hiding place within the Church for those who seek to abuse others.

I must also take the opportunity to thank those who have worked tirelessly and in difficult circumstances to enable the NCSC during 2020. This includes Dr Colette Limbrick and her CSAS team and, most particularly, the NCSC's Secretary, Anna Gebski. I am very grateful for your support, and I know that Chris Pearson could not speak too highly about your contribution.

Finally, thanks must go to all NCSC members, and, in this context, I would like to quote Chris' words in his final email to NCSC members:

'Thanks to everyone for all the hard work during 2020, not an easy year but safeguarding does not bring rewards just new beginnings to improve on what has taken place beforehand and an assurance that what we have done is for the good of all to protect children and adults at risk. We have achieved much this year and all have contributed to those achievements.'



Rachel O'Driscoll
Lay Vice Chair, NCSC

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Section two

NCSC developments 2020

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Safe Spaces is a collaborative project developed between the Catholic Church and the Church of England is delivered by Victim Support and provides a free, national support service for any survivor of church-related abuse.

”

A graphic consisting of two concentric red circles. The text 'NCSC developments 2020' is centered within the inner circle.

NCSC developments 2020

This Annual Report represents the concluding action of the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission, consequent on the Catholic Bishops Conference's and the NCSC's acceptance of the recommendations of the independent Elliott review in November 2020 and the subsequent implementation of the new safeguarding structures and processes in the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

This ongoing activity includes the creation of the new Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (the CSSA), a new central professional standards agency responsible for setting the standards for safeguarding within the Catholic Church, which will operate under the direction of a Board appointed in May 2021. The reforms also involve the separation of safeguarding

systems as between religious congregations and dioceses, creating a bespoke safeguarding structure for each which recognises their separate and unique characteristics; this significantly strengthens safeguarding governance and builds upon the NCSC's experience of safeguarding across both dioceses and religious congregations.

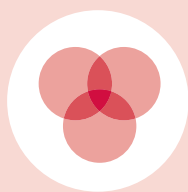
Despite the fact of its imminent de-commissioning and the need to work on a virtual basis because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the NCSC continued to work actively through 2020 to progress its three priority areas:

The NCSC has three key thematic priority areas:



1

Understanding the impact of abuse and developing a culture of sensitivity throughout the Church based on listening, responding and supporting both child and adult victims and survivors of abuse;



2

Promoting the 'One Church' approach to safeguarding to ensure that what is done in the name of safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk is open and transparent; and,



3

To model and promote good governance with respect to safeguarding within the Church.

N. B.: These intrinsically-linked key themes formed the basis of the key strategic objectives set out in the NCSC's Business Plan.

Review of the NCSC Survivor Advisory Panel (the SAP) (thematic priority 1)

The NCSC considered the independent Review of the NCSC's SAP, conducted by Baroness Hollins and Matthew Hemson, at several meetings during 2020. Recommendations included a number relating to improvement of communications between the NCSC and the SAP, designed to maximise the impact of the contribution made by the SAP and ensure that the NCSC was

best positioned to hear the 'authentic voice of survivors'. Ongoing work on implementation was affected by the de-commissioning of the NCSC and the need to consider the recommendations in the light of the Independent Review recommendations. Work is now ongoing to develop proposals arising from the recommendations which take account of the changed context and which will be for consideration by the new CSSA Board.

The strong legacy of the NCSC in setting up the SAP as an example of a survivor engagement panel provides a template for survivor and victim engagement in the future.

The SAP's work

(thematic priority 1 and 2)

A separate report will be provided by the Chairman of the SAP elsewhere in this Annual Report, but in the NCSC's final report it is important to celebrate the contribution of the NCSC's expert advisory panel. As set out in our last Annual Report, a significant development was the formulation by the SAP of Six Principles for safeguarding (which promote sensitivity to the perspective of survivors and victims and cover communication, training and avoiding the loss of the survivor or victim focus).

This year the SAP built on this work by considering how to assess the application of these principles in practice. Moreover, the alignment of this work with the broader audit mechanisms of the CSSA is under discussion.

In readiness for the implementation of the IICSA review recommendation on training the SAP has developed a set of learning outcomes relating to the survivor and victim perspective. Work is ongoing on proposals for the CSSA on the embedding of this work within the national training framework.

The NCSC is enormously grateful to the members of the SAP for their hard work and dedication in the cause of engaging and empowering survivors to contribute to sensitive and successful safeguarding. If the system does not work for survivors and victims, it does not work. We therefore look forward to the SAP's continuing involvement as the influence of the survivor voice within the Church grows and matures within the new safeguarding structures.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA):

(thematic priority 1, 2 and 3)

Together with the CSAS, the Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious, the NCSC continued to provide support and evidence to the Inquiry in the period leading up to the publication of the final report on the Catholic Church in England and Wales on 10 November 2020. The final report was considered at the NCSC's December meeting and the elements of the report dealing with the voice of victims and survivors were fed into ongoing work by the SAP. N. B.: The Bishops' response to the IICSA Report into the Roman Catholic Church post-dated the last NCSC meeting and was published on 9 May 2021.

Independent Review into the Safeguarding Structures and arrangements in the Catholic Church in England and Wales [the ‘Elliott Review’]

(thematic priority 1, 2 and 3)

As previously mentioned, the NCSC approved the recommendations in the Elliott Report and did so at its meeting in October 2020. It is worth repeating here some of the points made during the NCSC’s discussions:

- **Many of the Elliott Report’s recommendations addressed issues raised in the IICSA Report;**
- **The Report’s proposals and recommendations helpfully underlined the ‘One Church’ approach;**
- **The Report, valuably, recognised that the perspective of survivors and victims is pivotal to successful safeguarding: ‘To provide an effective safeguarding service, it is imperative that the voice of those that have been harmed through their involvement with the Church, is heard and learnt from’; and,**
- **The value of full consultation with the Survivors’ Advisory Panel (SAP) could not be underestimated and should be fully realised through strong engagement with victims and survivors during the Independent Review implementation phase and thereafter.**

General Decree for Safeguarding

(thematic priority 2 and 3)

As reported in the 2019 Annual Report, a General Decree for Safeguarding has been submitted by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales to the Holy See for *Recognitio*. If granted, this decree would have the effect of giving juridical authority to the Church’s safeguarding rules for children and adults at risk and would also secure a right of recourse to the Holy See against a diocese, religious congregation or other juridical person which failed to fulfil the obligations laid down in that law. The final outcome of this submission to the Holy See is still awaited.

Safe Spaces

(thematic priority 1 and 2)

A major piece of longstanding work realised in 2020 was the establishment of the [Safe Spaces](#) initiative, a collaborative project developed between the Catholic Church and the Church of England to provide a free, national support service for any survivor of church-related abuse. The charity Victim Support was awarded the contract to independently manage this important additional resource which, via a helpline staffed by trained support advocates and a web [live chat service](#), offers help to anyone who may have experienced trauma in the context of church activity. The Service commenced operations on 29 September and represents an important step for the Church in listening and responding to the needs of those who it has damaged. The NCSC is very grateful to all who played a part in bringing this important new initiative to fruition; particular thanks are due to those victims and survivors who contributed to its development.

Supporting the Durham University Boundary Breaking project

(thematic priority 1)

During 2020, the NCSC met with Dr Marcus Pound, Dr Giuseppe Bolotta and Dr Catherine Sexton from Durham University to discuss their research project: '[Boundary Breaking: Examining the cultural-ecclesial implications of the sex abuse crisis within the Catholic Church](#)'. Taking a theological approach, the three-year research project aims to examine the extent to which aspects of Catholic culture and understanding have contributed to the creation of an environment in which abuse, and its subsequent mishandling, was and is possible. After receiving a report on progress at its September meeting, the NCSC confirmed its support for the project. The research team is committed to collaborating with victims and survivors and accordingly drew on the expertise of the SAP during 2020. It is to be hoped that the project will continue to engage with the SAP, as well as establishing lines of communication with the CSSA.

Amendments to National Policy and Procedure

(thematic priority 2 and 3)

The NCSC accepted clarifying amendments to the Management of Allegations Policy at its March 2020 meeting, designed to make reporting responsibilities unequivocal.

Quality Assurance: 2019 Audit Overview Report

(thematic priority 2)

The NCSC accepted an overview report on the 2019 CSAS-conducted quality assurance exercise which focussed on:

- **Management of concerns and allegations (referral to statutory agencies)**
- **Management of risk of those in ministry where concerns remain**

The Commission agreed that the overview report should be circulated widely in order that the learning from the exercise could be used to inform good practice. The report was accordingly sent to Bishops, for sharing with their diocesan trustees, Religious Leads, Commission Chairs and Safeguarding Co-ordinators.

Model Constitution for Safeguarding for Safeguarding Commissions

(thematic priority 2 and 3)

As part of a programme of work to model and promote good governance and support the 'One Church' approach, a major project for the NCSC has been the development of a model constitution to be used by Diocesan Commissions and Religious Congregations with Independent Commissions. Work on the model constitution concluded in 2020 and at its June 2020 meeting, the NCSC agreed that even in the face of likely imminent changes to safeguarding structures and processes, it would be advantageous to offer Trustees and Commissions the immediate option of using the constitution (as its use had the potential to improve governance and its adoption could act as a learning exercise for both Commissions and the NCSC). In order not to pre-empt any recommendations for change that might be made by the Independent Review, adoption of the model constitution was, however, made optional.

National Safeguarding Training Policy paper

(thematic priority 1, 2 and 3)

A National Safeguarding Training Policy, designed to implement the Bishops' 2019 approval of measures to clarify, strengthen and develop National Safeguarding Training Programme requirements, was approved by the Commission in March 2020 and now forms part of the national safeguarding policies and procedures.

Caring Safely for Others, Pastoral Standards and Safe Conduct in Ministry

(thematic priority 1 and 2)

The NCSC welcomed the Bishops' publication of standards for ministry ('Caring Safely for Others, Pastoral Standards and Safe Conduct in Ministry') in July 2020. It sets out and promotes the standards expected of all office holders in dealing with people in their ministerial roles and meets the need for guidance, training and ongoing formation concerning the conduct of clergy in relation to the ministry of safeguarding.

National template complaints policy and procedure

The CSAS Staff, working with a group consisting of Diocesan Financial Secretaries, Safeguarding Commission Chairs and Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinators, produced a framework and template for complaints about diocesan safeguarding services. This included complaints against Bishops. This addresses the need for: clear communication between the complainant and those handling the complaint, for escalation of the process if the outcome is felt to be unsatisfactory and, at all stages, provision of a clear timeline for what happens when and how this is communicated. The policy was ratified by the Bishops at their November 2020 Plenary Assembly.

NCSC 'Risk Register'

(thematic priority 3)

Work continued on development of the Risk Register in 2020 and reflected the implications of external developments including the work of the Independent Review and IICSA. As part of this work, the NCSC reviewed its Risk Register in the context of the Covid-19 restrictions. This included writing to Commission Chairs and Safeguarding Coordinators asking for confirmation that confirm that Trustees had considered the implications of providing safeguarding services within the Covid-19 restrictions and that relevant Risk Registers reflected this.

At the final meeting of the NCSC, the Risk Register was formally passed to the CSSA.



In readiness for the implementation of the IICSA review recommendation on training with survivor involvement, the SAP has developed a set of learning outcomes relating to the survivor and victim perspective.



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Section three Survivor Advisory Panel

Survivor Advisory Panel 2020

The primary function of the Survivor Advisory Panel (SAP) in 2020, as in preceding years, was to ensure that the NCSC received appropriate and timely information and advice from a survivor perspective to inform the work of the NCSC regarding safeguarding policies, procedures and practices within the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

The Survivor Advisory Panel was set up in 2016 following the extensive consideration of various models for survivor engagement. Prospective members were invited to apply and evidence in an appropriate setting their suitability and experience as victims/survivors or professionals, who had extensive experience of working with survivors in a professional capacity.

The SAP continued to endeavour to provide the NCSC with:

- **Advice/recommendations on matters relevant to victims/survivors**
- **Knowledge/insight into experience of abuse**
- **Positive contribution to improve responses regarding victim disclosures and Church support**
- **Inform and influence work – identifying previously unidentified areas/topics for attention**
- **Input on the NCSC media and communications strategy**

SAP membership and meetings

The SAP currently has eight members of the maximum permitted 12, a secretary and, in addition, a link member from both the NCSC and CSAS. The chair also attends the NCSC meetings. Since the SAP's inaugural meeting in February 2016, it has regularly held four meetings each year. Although members are unpaid volunteers and only expected to attend four meetings a year they regularly contribute to other meetings, events and work related to their role.

In August 2019, in line with the SAP terms of reference, a review of the SAP's Terms of Reference and a formal evaluation of its three-year pilot phase was commenced. Baroness Hollins and Mr Matthew Hemson who published their findings in 2020 undertook this review.

In the report's executive summary it stated

'The SAP has fulfilled, and, with respect to its training role, gone over and above its terms of reference in ways that have received wide acclamation. The terms of reference and funding of the SAP should be reviewed. There is still work to do to ensure adequate communication between the NCSC and the SAP so that the SAP's views are properly heard and respected. Continuity of membership is important but new members will refresh the group with new experience'.

Recommendations included:

1. Training to ensure that **members of the NCSC and the SAP** fully understand their complementary roles.
2. The **updates from the SAP** should be given greater priority on the **NCSC agenda** and more detailed updates provided on the **SAP projects**.
3. To create an **Independent Speakers Panel** which has its own budget, has dedicated administrative support, and remunerates training associates. The **relationship with the SAP, the NCSC and the CSAS** should be carefully considered including ensuring that survivors are involved in designing and delivering all training. A meeting to explore the options with relevant stakeholders should be requested with a potential funder.
4. To **recognise, respect and welcome the developing ministry of survivors to the rest of the Church**. To ensure that the spiritual harm caused by abuse is remembered in the Church's responses, and that God needs to be present at all times.
5. The **SAP's presence, contribution and ministry to the NCSC, the wider Church and society** should be shared much more broadly, in particular to deepen the culture change and understanding that survivors are part of the solution rather than the problem.
6. Members should have **flexible terms of membership** but with a requirement for a break of at least 1 year after 6 years and with the possibility of new roles being brokered on their behalf as training associates or to establish a provincial SAP.

Work on the Hollins recommendations was commenced by the NCSC in conjunction with the SAP but not taken up by the Elliott Review, which was not in favour of the SAP model. This was despite the SAP model having been adopted as good practice by the Church on an International level through the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (PCPM), following work over 4 years between the SAP and PCPM.

The Chair and members of the SAP are key speakers at a June PCPM seminar (2021) entitled “Developing a culture of healing: Promoting a culturally sensitive approach for listening and responding to those who have been abused.” Presenters were asked to consider and contribute to the themes and requests that have emerged from the Commission’s work with victim/survivors, particularly the local Survivor Advisory Panel pilot projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Brazil, Europe and the United States. There were representatives from 28 countries from Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia/Oceania at the three-day seminar. The first presentations on day one were from survivors and survivors from the SAP in England and Wales concluded the seminar on the third day.

The role and work of the SAP was also highlighted in 2020 for positive comment by IICSA in their report, for example:

- **H3.30. ‘The creation of the SAP is a positive addition to the Church’s safeguarding structure. The Church should actively work with the SAP to incorporate the victims and survivors views into any future changes to its safeguarding work.**
- **L1.28. There remains a lack of focus on the needs of victims.**
- **L1.29. Training – SAP a positive addition including the impact of abuse on victims and survivors. This kind of training needs to be on a more regular and ongoing basis and be more widely available.**
- **Recommendation 2 – Training – should be developed in conjunction with the SAP.**

The emphasis and part the SAP could play as outlined by IICSA was also unfortunately not recommended in the Elliott Review.

The SAP members have a breadth of experience in relation to the issues impacting on survivors of abuse from both a professional and/or personal perspective. Full details were listed on the SAP page of the NCSC web site.

SAP work plan

Some projects have continued despite the Covid-19 restrictions with SAP actively involved in existing and more recent projects. The following are examples:

1. Two members of the SAP are now members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group for the Durham University project 'Boundary Breaking: Ecclesial-cultural implications of the sex abuse crisis within the Catholic Church'.
2. The SAP provided input into the CSAS 'Code for care for victims and survivors'.
3. Following their work on contributing to the establishment of Safe Spaces England and Wales (SSEW), two members of the SAP are now on the Safe Spaces Steering Group which is managed by Victim Support.
4. 'The SAP members worked with the Marriage and Family Life Office, Department for Social Justice – helping inform spiritual and liturgical support for survivors and their families with resources for communities and dioceses, including on liturgy for a Day of Prayer.
5. Carrying on from the production of the SAP 'Six key thoughts from the Victims and Survivors perspective', originally produced for Cardinal Nichols and shared in full in the NCSC 2019 report, members of the SAP have helped design an audit tool based on these six key themes for use by Safeguarding Commissions, for training and for supporting relevant audits going forward.
6. The Hurt by Abuse leaflets 1) Guide for victims/survivors and 2) Guide to supporting victims/survivors, that had been redesigned by the SAP, are now more widely available.
7. As already identified by the Hollins SAP review (2020) and the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Report into the Roman Catholic Church (11/2020) SAP's value in the sphere of training is now firmly established. The comments in these reports previously quoted above, recognised the SAP's growing contribution to training going back over many years including:
 - **Input to NCSC 1 day training (2017)**
 - **Ampleforth Abbey (2018)**
 - **Buckfast Abbey (2019)**
 - **Bishop's Conference (2019)**
 - **Brentwood Diocese training day (2019)**
 - **Attendance at the Anglophone Conferences (2016-2019)**
 - **Meetings with the PCPM at Worth Abbey and then in Rome (2018)**
8. Building on the SAP's established training expertise and relevant content in the Hollins, Elliott and IICSA reports and the National Safeguarding Training Policy, the SAP has contributed to the development of a new training programme. The work led by Elizabeth Manero (SAP NCSC link member) has identified key learning outcomes from the Survivor/Victim perspective.

Whilst it is still uncertain how the SAP will develop alongside the new CSSA, it is hoped that the foundation laid by the original NCSC SAP will continue to be recognised and developed alongside and in conjunction with the new Survivor Reference Group advocated by the Elliott Review.

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Section four

Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service



The national safeguarding policies and procedures were updated in June 2020, and several stand-alone documents were consolidated into a single document for ease of reference.





Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service

Whereas the NCSC is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Church's Safeguarding policy, the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS) is responsible for driving and supporting improvements in practice. The primary role of CSAS is one of co-ordination, advice and support to the Catholic Church in England and Wales in respect of Safeguarding children, young people and adults.

The Independent Review into Safeguarding Structures and Arrangements

In July 2019, the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC) appointed Mr Ian Elliot to undertake an independent review of the safeguarding structures and arrangements of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. Mr Elliot established a panel to lead the progress of the review and the CSAS has supported the work of the Review Panel throughout 2020.

The Independent Review recommended that the CSAS and the NCSC be replaced with a single body, and this recommendation was accepted by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in November 2020. We are wholeheartedly in support of the recommendations made by Mr Ian Elliott and look forward to supporting the implementation project that will be established.

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA)

The Independent Inquiry into the nature and extent of, and institutional responses to, child sexual abuse, established on 15th March 2015 by the Home Secretary for England and Wales, reported in November 2020 and made recommendations that will be implemented, alongside the recommendations of the Independent Review chaired by Mr Ian Elliott, during 2020.

This is the last annual report from the CSAS and I would like to extend my thanks to the NCSC and to everybody who has collaborated with and supported the work of the team. We wish the CSSA Board and team every success as they take these important recommendations forward.

Overview of 2020

Advice and support

The CSAS continued to provide support and advice to: Religious Congregations and Orders, diocesan offices, Catholic organisations, members of the public, other faith organisations and professionals.

We jointly published, with the national Community Sponsorship Steering Group, national template safeguarding policies and procedures to support the local schemes providing this service.

Working with the Church of England, and survivor representatives from both denominations, the CSAS supported implementation of the Safe Spaces service for victims and survivors of abuse. This service is delivered by Victim Support and has at its heart, engagement with victims and survivors on the development of the service.

Policy development and review

The national safeguarding policies and procedures were updated in June 2020, and several stand-alone documents were consolidated into a single document for ease of reference.

The Independent Review chaired by Mr Ian Elliott recommended adoption of 8 safeguarding standards which are to become the reference framework against which all safeguarding practice will be assessed. It was recognised that whilst there is a comprehensive suite of national safeguarding policies, procedures, and related guidance documents, there does not currently exist a coherent set of overarching standards that set out the intent of the Catholic Church in England and Wales in respect of its safeguarding arrangements and practices. These standards are to be viewed as statements of intent that explain the actions that the Church wishes to take to deliver effective safeguarding.

These include the following:

- 1) Safeguarding is embedded in the Church's Leadership, Governance, Ministry, and Culture**
- 2) Communicating the Church's safeguarding message**
- 3) Engaging with and Caring for those that have been harmed**
- 4) Effective Management of Allegations and Concerns**
- 5) Support and Management of Respondents**
- 6) Robust Human Resource Management**
- 7) Training and Support for Safeguarding**
- 8) Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**

For each safeguarding standard, there will be criteria identified along with evidence that could be used to indicate compliance. Adoption and implementation of these standards will pass to the new Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, which will be launched during 2021.

A new training policy was implemented during 2020.

Oversight and co-ordination of safeguarding training within the Church

The national training coordinator produced new training materials to support delivery of safeguarding training, and delivered training against the national learning outcomes to dioceses using online platforms, to ensure that the COVID-19 pandemic did not delay the delivery of training where we had committed to delivering this.

The recommendations relating to training arising from the report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) and the Independent Inquiry chaired by Mr Ian Elliott, will be addressed by the new Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency during 2021. These recommendations include ensuring that safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers in roles where they work with children or victims and survivors of abuse; the completion of refresher training and that training considers the impact of child sexual abuse, including the impact of trauma and the perspective of victims and survivors, and should be developed in conjunction with the Survivor Advisory Panel. It is also proposed that there is a dedicated standard for safeguarding training which requires church bodies to provide ongoing training and support to everyone involved in safeguarding to enable them to deliver the practice described within the safeguarding standards.

Partnership projects

Unfortunately, the impact of Covid-19 on working arrangements across partner agencies has affected progress on a collaborative project with the Catholic Youth Ministry Federation (CYMFED), which is concerned with the creation of information and resources for children and young people to inform them of their rights and responsibilities. Progress on an ecumenical project, in partnership with the NSPCC to produce 4 short films around online safety in faith-based settings, has also been delayed due to the impact of Covid-19 on partner agencies.

We have been working closely with Circles of Support on a project to develop pilot sites in two dioceses, to augment existing safeguarding arrangements. Circles work with people who have committed sex offences to reduce their risk of reoffending. A group of volunteers work with an individual (the circle) who has been assessed as a high risk, to support them to reintegrate safely into the community, whilst holding the individual to account for their past and future behaviours.

These projects will continue under the auspices of the CSSA during 2021 and beyond.

Quality assurance

During 2019, the CSAS conducted a quality assurance exercise in 22 diocesan safeguarding offices and 6 independent religious safeguarding commissions, examining:

1) Management of concerns and allegations (referral to statutory agencies)

2) Management of risk of those in ministry where concerns remain

An overview report was published during 2020, which concluded that there was demonstrable good practice in some areas. Thematically, recommendations related to review of cases to ensure that risk referrals had been made to statutory authorities and risk was being adequately managed, case records more clearly identifying risk information that can be linked to safeguarding plans, review of safeguarding plans, and increases in staffing levels. These recommendations related to fewer than half of all dioceses.

DBS and Ebulk

Roll-out of the new integrated DBS database and Ebulk system continued during 2020. The integration is intended to streamline existing processes and reduce the administrative time spent on this process in Diocesan safeguarding offices. This project will continue under the wing of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency.

Dr Colette Limbrick

Director
CSAS



**With sincere thanks to all those
who have supported the work of
the NCSC over the last 13 years:
2008-2021**



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Section five Appendix One Membership

2020 membership

National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC)

Chris Pearson (Chair) – RIP January 2021

Rt Rev Marcus Stock
(Vice Chair)

Rachel O’Driscoll
(Lay Vice Chair)

Dani Wardman
(Lay Vice Chair and CoR representative)

Rt Reverend Mark Davies

Rt Reverend Paul Mason

Elizabeth Manero

Rev Dr Brendan Killeen

Fr Nicholas Edmonds-Smith

Sr Eileen Glancy

Kathy Perrin
(Co-opted Catholic Insurance Service member)

Dave Marshall
(SAP representative)

Peter Charlesworth
(Co-opted Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator)

Patrick McDermott
(Co-opted Safeguarding Commission Chair) from March 2020

James Reilly
(Co-opted Safeguarding Commission Chair) from March 2020

Dr Colette Limbrick
(in attendance) (CSAS Director)

Christine Edgar
(in attendance) (CSAS Safeguarding Manager)

Secretary

Anna Gebski
(NCSC and SAP Secretary)

Survivor Advisory Panel for National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (SAP)

Dave Marshall QPM
(SAP Chair)

Andrew Browne

Panna Modi

Frances Healy

Marie Grant

Anthony Griffin

Maxine Leigh

Anonymous

Secretary and Link members

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