

## **Our Commitment to Safeguarding**

All components of the Catholic Church in Scotland, especially those in positions of leadership and responsibility, value the lives, wholeness, safety and well-being of each individual person within God's purpose for everyone.

We seek to uphold the highest safeguarding standards in our relationships with people of all ages who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations.

And therefore, as a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us - ordained, professed, employed and voluntary members - to work together to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse or harm.

## 1 National Application of this Instruction

- 1.1 In Scotland, since 1947, the Catholic Church has been organised into eight separate territorial jurisdictions. There are two archdioceses (Saint Andrews and Edinburgh, Glasgow) and six dioceses (Aberdeen, Argyll and the Isles, Dunkeld, Galloway, Motherwell and Paisley). By divine law, the bishop or archbishop has full executive, legislative and judicial power in his territory which, however, he can only use in accordance with canon law. At the same time, in order to promote some pastoral and other initiatives embracing all eight jurisdictions, the archbishops and bishops together form what is called a "conference of bishops". A conference of bishops does not exist by divine law but by ecclesiastical law. The bishops, then, meet as a conference several times per year to confer and decide upon the kinds of initiatives mentioned. Even so, each bishop or archbishop retains exclusive power of jurisdiction over the people entrusted to him. The conference is not a superior authority which a bishop must obey. Hence, the conference of bishops cannot oblige him to endorse a decision or to implement it in his jurisdiction. In accordance with the law, he must himself personally decide to implement for his own jurisdiction any measure agreed by the conference of bishops. Such is the case, for example, with the present safeguarding manual.
- 1.2 There are also other jurisdictions within the Catholic Church in Scotland, as elsewhere, which are exempt by canon law from the authority of the diocesan bishops. For example, a religious order and a monastic community enjoy such exemption in their internal life and organisation. This exemption is to allow the exempted community, in accordance with canon law, to pursue holiness of life under the inspiration of its founder. Nevertheless, in certain matters, canon law requires these jurisdictions to be subject to the diocesan bishop, e.g. if a religious order runs a parish. In the case of Safeguarding, exempt religious Institutes are not subject to the authority of the bishop, but the bishops have asked the religious orders and other such groups to adopt the same approach as themselves.
- 1.3 With specific regard to these Safeguarding arrangements, each Bishop has sought the co-operation and support of the Major Superiors of the Religious Institutes that minister in his diocese. (N. B. Throughout this document, the term "Religious Institute" is used in an analogical sense to encompass all institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, or their equivalents in law, as well as those Associations of the Faithful whose life is similar to that of religious. Any references to "Religious" or "Major Superiors" would thus apply to their counterparts in Secular Institutes, Societies of Apostolic Life, and public associations of the Christian Faithful).
- 1.4 We, the Bishops of Scotland, commissioned the General Secretariat of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to draft this document to establish a framework of Safeguarding standards for the Catholic Church in Scotland. We are now co-signatories to this document because we support and endorse these standards.

- 1.5 We require these Safeguarding arrangements to be followed not only by Safeguarding employees and volunteers but by all Catholic clergy, religious and consecrated persons living in Scotland, even if they are retired or working outside of any Diocesan structures or outside of Religious Institutes. We have sought the co-operation of all other canonical jurisdictions in Scotland with these arrangements. These jurisdictions include: the Bishopric of the Forces, the Personal Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei, the Apostolic Exarchate for Ukrainians in Great Britain, the Eparchy of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Communities in Great Britain, the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham in Scotland.
- 1.6 We have also sought the co-operation of all groups and organisations associated with the Catholic Church that work with vulnerable groups in Scotland.
- 1.7 In view of all the foregoing, and especially in view of our shared and convinced belief that the gravity of the issue, the harm it has done to individuals, families and communities, and the means required to deal with it effectively all demand it, each and every one of the undersigned bishops solemnly undertakes to promulgate this Instruction by Decree for observance in his own territory. We further commend to the Major Superiors of Religious Institutes and to those who govern all and any other canonical jurisdiction which falls partially or wholly within Scotland that they likewise decree the implementation of this Instruction.
- 1.8 Since this Instruction enjoins obligations upon persons who hold ecclesiastical offices or who have stated responsibilities in Safeguarding within the Church, the deliberate violation of those obligations and responsibilities, or culpable neglect in carrying them out, may call for disciplinary measures in accordance with canon law.

## Signed by the Bishops of Scotland on the Solemnity of St Joseph, Guardian of the Universal Church, 19th March 2018

+ Philip Tartaglia.

Philip Tartaglia  
Archbishop of Glasgow

+ Leo Cushley.

Leo Cushley  
Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

+ Joseph Toal

Joseph Toal  
Bishop of Motherwell

+ Hugh Gilbert

Hugh Gilbert  
Bishop of Aberdeen

+ Stephen Robson.

Stephen Robson  
Bishop of Dunkeld

+ John Keenan

John Keenan  
Bishop of Paisley

+ William Nolan

William Nolan  
Bishop of Galloway

+ Brian McGee

Brian McGee  
Bishop of Argyll & the Isles

## 2 Background

- 2.1 'In God's Image' has been published **to explain and to direct** the approach to Safeguarding that is to be practised at every level of the Catholic Church in Scotland. For the public, and for Catholic faith communities in particular, it has been written **to explain** how the Catholic Church in Scotland makes every effort to protect from all forms of harm and abuse those children and adults who are vulnerable or at risk<sup>1</sup>. It has also been written **to direct** those who are responsible for managing Safeguarding arrangements in parishes, dioceses, Religious Institutes and Catholic organisations on how to comply with these national Safeguarding standards.
- 2.2 This approach has taken into account recommendations made in 2015 by the McLellan Commission<sup>2</sup> that was instigated in 2013 by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland to provide an independent review of Safeguarding policies, procedures and practice in the Catholic Church in Scotland.
- 2.3 The document has been influenced by guidance offered by the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, an advisory body of international experts, established by Pope Francis to advance the commitment of the Church at every level "to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the protection of minors and vulnerable adults."<sup>3</sup> Above all, 'In God's Image' has been shaped by the recent experience and developing expertise of those involved in the front line of Safeguarding in the Church, both in Scotland and internationally. Significantly, this experience includes responding to the hurt and anguish of those who have suffered abuse at the hands of clergy, religious and others working within the Catholic Church.
- 2.4 Drafts of the text were distributed for comment to various parties in Scotland and beyond. These included groups that are independent of the Catholic Church.
- 2.5 Following publication, a comprehensive series of training opportunities to familiarise participants with the policies, procedures and standards elaborated in this document will be provided for Safeguarding personnel and clergy across Scotland. Additional materials will be provided (in print and on-line) to advise clergy and Safeguarding personnel, as well as to inform parish communities and the general public, of our policies and procedures.
- 2.6 The document, which will be hosted on the website of the Bishops' Conference of Scotland, will be kept under constant review, revised in the light of further developments and informed by best practice in Safeguarding. It will be published 'ad experimentum', for a period of three years from March 2018, to allow for further reflection, in light of its use.

<sup>1</sup> The terms "child", "vulnerable adults" and "adults at risk" are defined in the Glossary.

<sup>2</sup> McLellan Commission [https://www.bcos.org.uk/Portals/0/McLellan/363924\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.bcos.org.uk/Portals/0/McLellan/363924_WEB.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis, Circular Letter, 2 February 2015

### 3 Introduction

- 3.1 We read in the first chapter of Genesis that humans are created “in the image of God” (Gen. 1:27)<sup>4</sup>. From this, we come to believe that each human life is inherently valuable and that each human person is innately endowed with a dignity that is precious. This belief provides the theological foundation for the Safeguarding policies of the Catholic Church in Scotland.
- 3.2 We are committed to respecting, protecting and nurturing the dignity of all people. We are determined that the Catholic Church in Scotland will offer a safe place in all Church premises and activities, and with all Church personnel. As leaders of the Catholic community in Scotland, we are committed to improving the culture of our Safeguarding approach in order to rebuild trust and confidence in the ways in which we ensure that children and vulnerable adults are kept safe.
- 3.3 So, Safeguarding in our parishes will be a very pressing priority when we plan religious services and community activities. We shall prioritise Safeguarding in our parishes, dioceses, seminaries and centres of religious formation when we admit, recruit, appoint and train clergy and religious, lay employees and volunteers to work with vulnerable groups. We shall demonstrate how we have prioritised our Safeguarding commitments in the care and compassion we show, and in the protection and healing we offer, to those who have survived abuse by members of the Catholic Church.
- 3.4 This document makes frequent use of the terms “we”, “us” and “our” throughout. This is testimony to the collective sense of responsibility shared by all members of the Catholic Church in Scotland for the Safeguarding arrangements that now lie at the heart of the work of our faith communities. This shared responsibility does not, however, compromise the specific statutory and canonical responsibilities of Bishops and Major Superiors.
- 3.5 Our Safeguarding approaches, led by each Bishop and Major Superior, and delivered by clergy, Religious, Safeguarding personnel and lay people in every parish community, Religious Institute and Catholic organisation, are designed to protect and heal, to safeguard and nurture all who have contact with Catholic faith communities across Scotland.

<sup>4</sup> This Scripture excerpt, and all others in this document, are taken from *The Jerusalem Bible* © 1966 by Darton Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd. Reprinted by permission.

## 4 Scripture and Safeguarding

- 4.1 It is of fundamental importance that the whole Catholic community should understand and accept, in mind and heart, this essential truth: what we call “Safeguarding”, or how we keep children and vulnerable adults safe within our Catholic community, comes from the very heart of the message of God’s love made incarnate in his Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord.
- 4.2 When Jesus was asked which was the first of the Commandments, he responded: ‘This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.’ (Mark 12:28-30). Seen from this perspective, the Safeguarding of children and of all vulnerable people is a work of love that emerges from the fundamental programme of Christian faith and living, mandated by Jesus himself. This is true, too, of the Church’s commitment to respond in justice and compassion to the care of victims and survivors of abuse.
- 4.3 Jesus was unutterably tender with children. He welcomed them, embraced them and blessed them. He declared children to be the living symbols of the kind of person who will be admitted to the kingdom of God. The Gospel records that Jesus said: “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not enter the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” Then he put his arms round him, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.’ (Mark 10:13-16). Safeguarding, then, is about cherishing and protecting children and all vulnerable people, as Jesus would, and about responding in the right manner to victims and survivors of abuse.
- 4.4 Destroying the innocence of children is not just serious in Jesus’ view but unprecedentedly grave. He may well have had children in mind when he said: “But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith would be better thrown into the sea with a great millstone round his neck.” (Mark 9:42). So, it is right that any priest or religious who is found guilty of the sexual abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult is liable for a penalty of dismissal from the priesthood or religious life.
- 4.5 Jesus also healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, made cripples walk again, cast out devils, and even raised the dead. These miracles were nothing less than the kingdom of God breaking into our lives. They were also a witness of Jesus’ love, mercy and concern for a whole variety of people who were vulnerable. By the same token, Jesus’ disciples, who serve the coming of God’s kingdom and rule among us, are called to respect, protect, value and safeguard the vulnerable in our communities.

- 4.6 According to Jesus, the way we treat the little ones, the poor, the needy and the vulnerable will be relevant to our eternal destiny. The fact is that Jesus identifies profoundly with these little ones and with the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. At the Last Judgement, it will be no good saying: “When did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?” For then he will answer: “I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me” (Matthew 25:44-46). We are all to be judged on how fully we commit to Safeguarding those who are vulnerable or who have been abused.
- 4.7 The Catholic Church loves, welcomes and values children and regards fruitfulness as an integral part of marriage. At their wedding, husband and wife undertake to accept children lovingly from God. When children are born into a Catholic family, their fathers and mothers are invited to present them for baptism as soon as possible after birth. Babies and children are always welcome at Sunday Mass with their families. The Sacraments of Initiation for children are an important part of the annual cycle for all Catholic parishes. First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation are keenly anticipated and joyously celebrated in our communities. The Church, not least through the dedication of Religious Institutes and of Catholic teachers, has always striven to excel in the education of children and young people. Children and young people are at the heart of the vocation of parents and of the pastoral care of priests, religious and all pastoral workers. In the same way the Catholic Church, given its tradition of caring for the sick and homeless and marginalised, should be a welcoming home and a safe haven for vulnerable people and all people at risk. In short, Safeguarding should be second nature to the Catholic Church.
- 4.8 These observations aim to give the Catholic community, and to all who contribute to the Safeguarding effort in the Church, confidence that Safeguarding is a duty that is rooted in the message of Jesus and in the mission of the Church. Because of this message and that mission, the Catholic Church in Scotland must aspire to the highest standards with regard to the care and protection of children and vulnerable adults, and must actively promote justice for, and provide assistance to, those who have been abused.

## 5 Our Commitment to Law

- 5.1 The Scriptures and the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church developed throughout the centuries, as handed on by her official teaching authority (or “Magisterium”), as well as the natural law written on the human heart and known to conscience, constitute the foundation and horizon of all the laws of the Catholic Church. These laws must themselves be interpreted in that light. In promulgating this Instruction<sup>5</sup> on Safeguarding, each Bishop and Major Superior must of necessity heed this fuller sense of the Law of God. While there is no systematic treatment of Safeguarding in the Church’s Code of Canon Law (1983), the norms which are applicable to this matter must be interpreted in the light of the Divine Law. As Pope Benedict XVI once stated: “Canon Law cannot be shuttered within a merely human system of norms but must be connected to a just order of the Church, in which a higher law is in effect.”<sup>6</sup> The Scriptural dimension of that higher law with relevance for Safeguarding has been outlined above.
- 5.2 Coming now to the specific canonical norms which this Instruction seeks to clarify, elaborate and determine more closely for the purposes of Safeguarding, we find the following in the Code of Canon Law: the correct use and application of singular decrees and precepts (canons 48-58); the rights and duties inherent in the canonical condition of physical persons (canons 96-97; 98 §2; 99); the obligations and rights of all the Christian faithful (canons 208-210; 219-223); the adequate formation of clerics (canons 235, 241-245; 247); the obligations and rights of clerics (canons 276-277; 285); the legitimate process for the loss of the clerical state (canons 290-293); the obligations of diocesan bishops towards the faithful and towards clerics (canons 383-384); the correct use and application of the penal precept (canon 1319); delicts against special obligations (canon 1395 §2); the preliminary penal investigation (canons 1717-1719; 1722); and how to have recourse against administrative decrees (canons 1732-1739).
- 5.3 The principal ecclesiastical law outside the Code of Canon Law which is concerned is: the *Motu Proprio, Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* (2001), and the *Norms on the More Serious Delicts reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (2010).<sup>7</sup>
- 5.4 These substantive and procedural norms, underpinned by the Divine Law itself, ensure that the Safeguarding standards laid out in this Instruction are firmly grounded in the Church’s doctrine and life. They also ensure that, as the standards are implemented, the authority and protection of the law is guaranteed for all concerned.

<sup>5</sup> Can. 34 §1. Instructions clarify the prescripts of laws and elaborate on and determine the methods to be observed in fulfilling them. They are given for the use of those whose duty it is to see that laws are executed and oblige them in the execution of the laws. Those who possess executive power legitimately issue such instructions within the limits of their competence.

<sup>6</sup> [https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2012/january/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20120121\\_rota-romana.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2012/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20120121_rota-romana.html)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/resources/resources\\_norme\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/resources/resources_norme_en.html)

- 5.5 In 2011, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith directed conferences of bishops throughout the world to prepare 'clear and coordinated procedures' to deal with cases of abuse and with all related matters<sup>8</sup>. The Catholic Church in Scotland, aided especially by the McLellan Report, has now produced such procedures and standards to demonstrate its full commitment to the best interests of the child or vulnerable adult. Articles 3 and 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child outline the rights of children to be protected from harm and abuse.<sup>9</sup> In Scotland, the Adult Support and Protection Act 2007, guarantees the rights of "adults at risk", in compliance with the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 5.6 Within the context of Safeguarding, all components of the Catholic Church in Scotland, especially those in positions of leadership, are fully committed to these major responsibilities:
- regarding as their paramount concern the safety and welfare of children and adults who are vulnerable or at risk
  - ensuring the care and nurture of, and respectful ministry with all children and adults
  - establishing safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is informed vigilance as to the dangers of abuse
  - complying with Safeguarding legislation in Scotland
  - adhering to recognised good Safeguarding practice.
- 5.7 These commitments can only be met if everyone involved in Safeguarding within the Church in Scotland complies with the eight Safeguarding standards that are elaborated in Section B of this document. Moreover, compliance with these standards must be evidenced in ways that are transparent and open to public scrutiny.

## 6 Specific Safeguarding responsibilities

- 6.1 In each of the eight Dioceses in Scotland the prime pastoral and canonical responsibility for meeting these Safeguarding commitments lies with the **Bishop**. He is responsible for leading efforts to keep people safe, for dealing with all allegations against Church personnel within his Diocese and for acting in compliance with civil and canonical legislation.<sup>10</sup>
- 6.2 In this responsibility, the Bishop must be supported by those he has appointed to advise him and to manage Safeguarding arrangements in the Diocese – the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA), the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group (DSAG) and the Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team (DRAMT)<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20110503\\_levada-abuso-minori\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20110503_levada-abuso-minori_en.html)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/documents/professionalinterest/crc.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> With due regard, in particular, to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005

<sup>11</sup> It should be understood that, given the context of each Diocese, the employment patterns of Safeguarding personnel may vary; however, with appropriate guidance and training, the commitment of Safeguarding personnel to complying with these Safeguarding arrangements must be consistent.

- 6.3 The role of the **Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser** (DSA) is to advise and assist the Bishop in meeting his Safeguarding responsibilities. This must involve all matters that relate to ensuring the protection of children and vulnerable adults in their contact with Church personnel and/or on Church property in the Diocese. The DSA must co-ordinate efforts to raise awareness of Safeguarding within parish communities, including the recruiting and training of Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators, the recruiting of Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers and the training of Diocesan clergy. The DSA must also advise the Bishop on good practice in responding to allegations of abuse. It is recommended that, in each Diocese, the DSA role should be undertaken by a layperson.
- 6.4 The **Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group** (DSAG) must consist of people with relevant experience and skills, appointed by the Bishop to support the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser in his/her Safeguarding duties and to ensure Diocesan-wide adherence to the Safeguarding standards to which the Bishop is co-signatory. This should include the organisation of PVG applications and monitoring of on-going membership of the scheme across the Diocese. The DSAG should invite the National Safeguarding Co-ordinator to provide information on national Safeguarding developments at their meetings.
- 6.5 The **Diocesan Risk Assessment Management Team** (DRAMT) is appointed by the Bishop to assist him, within the strict limits of the law, in the management of individual cases where allegations have been made against a Diocesan cleric, employee or volunteer. They should consider: convictions on PVGs, those being considered for Listing and Barring and references which indicate that a volunteer should not be allowed to start or continue in post. This team's advice and recommendations should assist the Bishop to come to decisions about how to proceed, in accordance with both civil and canon law, in response to allegations and concerns.
- 6.6 The **Parish** can be seen as the 'frontline' of Safeguarding, where many children, young people and adults participate in religious services and community activities. The **Parish Priest** carries prime responsibility for ensuring that the parish provides a safe environment and protection from harm, in line with these policies, procedures and with legislation. He must appoint a **Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator** (PSC) who will support him with the management of Safeguarding in the parish. The PSC must ensure that any person working with vulnerable groups has been 'safely' recruited, according to vetting procedures outlined in this document. He/she must also take the lead role in promoting the participation of all volunteers in Safeguarding training provided by Diocesan Trainers. Any allegation made to a parish volunteer, employee or cleric must be reported immediately to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser who will manage the process thereafter.
- 6.7 In a **Religious Institute** the **Major Superior**, like a Bishop in his Diocese, carries the prime responsibility for meeting Safeguarding commitments and ensuring the co-operation of religious clergy, consecrated brothers and sisters who work with vulnerable groups. All Major Superiors of Religious Institutes working in Scotland have been asked to commit to working to the Safeguarding standards set out in this document.

- 6.8 Each Religious Institute has appointed a **Safeguarding Link Co-ordinator** who is responsible for assisting the Major Superior with Safeguarding responsibilities. This person has the lead role in ensuring that all religious personnel complete PVG applications at the local Diocesan office and that Safeguarding training is provided to all within their Religious Institute who work with vulnerable groups.
- 6.9 In some situations, such as the operation of a care home by a Religious Institute, the Safeguarding arrangements are regulated by the Care Commission which requires its own procedures to be followed for vetting and training staff.
- 6.10 Allegations against a member of a Religious Institute are managed by the Major Superior who is responsible for any decision about how to proceed in response to allegations, in accordance with both civil and canon law. The Major Superior will be assisted in making such decisions by advice from a group of colleagues with relevant expertise who fulfil a role similar to that of the DRAMT in a Diocese. The **Conference of Religious in Scotland Safeguarding Commission** (CRSSC) fulfils this function for some Religious Institutes in Scotland.
- 6.11 The main function of the **Bishops' Conference of Scotland** (BCOS) is to support the Bishops as they work together to undertake nationwide initiatives through various commissions and agencies. One such initiative has been the establishment of the **Scottish Catholic Safeguarding Service** with the remit to assist Dioceses to meet their Safeguarding responsibilities.
- 6.12 SCSS, led by the **National Safeguarding Co-ordinator** (NSC), does not manage or investigate specific cases of Safeguarding allegations. The expertise of the NSC is available to Dioceses and Religious Institutes that wish to seek advice on Safeguarding policies, procedures and protocols. The NSC mainly provides support through:
- advising the Bishops' Conference of any required updating of Safeguarding policies, protocols and standards
  - co-ordinating the development and provision of relevant training opportunities and materials which enable Dioceses and Religious Institutes to support clergy, religious, employees and volunteers in the application of Safeguarding policies, protocols and standards
  - researching, promoting and offering advice on best practice in Safeguarding
  - processing, monitoring and advising on applications for membership of the PVG scheme
  - being the Church's point of contact for national bodies, other churches and voluntary organisations dealing with Safeguarding
  - co-operating with the Independent Review Group with regard to the annual Safeguarding Audit.
- 6.13 The Bishops' Conference of Scotland has established an **Independent Review Group** (IRG) to provide independent monitoring and review of the Church's Safeguarding arrangements, starting in 2018. Each year, the IRG will review the data that has emerged from the annual Safeguarding Audit of all Dioceses, Parishes, Religious Institutes and Catholic organisations in Scotland. While not responsible for dealing with individual allegations, the IRG will undertake a detailed examination of all the Safeguarding data provided by two different Dioceses each year and make recommendations to the Dioceses and to the Bishops' Conference of Scotland about how Safeguarding practice might be improved. The IRG will publish an annual report on its findings and recommendations.