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**CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS AGENCY**

**SELF ASSESSMENT FOR AUDIT**

**SELF ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE NOTES:**

**The purpose of the self-assessment –** The self-assessment allows Church bodies to assess their implementation of, and adherence to, the [National Safeguarding Standards](https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/the-standards/) and the quality and impact of their safeguarding practice. The self-assessment enables you to consider where you are and what else you might need to do to develop effective, compliant and good quality safeguarding practice. A self-assessment will be requested prior to a CSSA audit and used by the Quality Assurance team to develop key-lines of enquiry for baseline and thematic audit.

**You should assess against each individual standard AND overall implementation and impact of the standards by considering the following areas:**

**How well are you meeting the standard?**

Provide an overview of your activity in respect of the standard, including analysis of its effectiveness and the impact it has had. Evidence should be provided for each of the sub-standards (LGC1, LGC2 etc.). CSSA will grade the effectiveness of your work in respect of each of the numbered points that make up the sub-standard. These can therefore be used as a guide as to the specific areas to cover.

**Evidence**

Use this section to bullet-point evidence which supports your analysis, adding brief details if needed for explanation. Evidence should be submitted to CSSA prior to the audit – it may be helpful to number documents, which can then be used as evidence for more than one standard. See the separate ‘Guidance for Evidence to be provided alongside the self-assessment’ document for advice as to types of evidence that are likely to be required.

**What are you doing well?**

Consider what works well in your implementation and practice in relation to each standard and overall. Again, be analytical rather than just listing – reflect on the quality of practice and its impact.

**What do you need to develop?**

Consider areas where you have identified development needs in terms of compliance and/or quality of practice. What is it that would help you be more effective? Be analytical and reflective – what difference would development in a particular area make to compliance and quality of practice? Please use the ‘Development Plan’ at the end of this document to outline what the forward plan is to action the areas for development identified in this self-assessment.

If you have any further queries about this document please contact [qualityassurance@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk](mailto:qualityassurance@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk)

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| **Standard 1 - Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body’s leadership, governance, ministry and culture** | |
| **LGC1 – Leadership – The Church body will:**   1. **Have a zero-tolerance approach to all abuse, recognising the possible escalation of low-level concerns into more serious incidents if not addressed.** 2. **Seek and support the engagement of those who report having been harmed in contacts with personnel of the Church body, listen and respond to them.** 3. **Make publicly available statements of its safeguarding commitments that are displayed within any location (e.g. physical and online) that it operates.** 4. **Ensure a culture of safeguarding, as everyone’s responsibility and integral to its mission and ministry, is championed by its leadership.** | |
| **LGC2 – Governance – the Church body’s leadership will:**   1. **Establish and regularly update their governance arrangements to ensure that they facilitate the implementation of the safeguarding standards.** 2. **Set out clearly the responsibilities of Bishops/Superiors, Parish Priests and other leaders of ministries and services for safeguarding practice to enable effective adherence to the agreed standards.** 3. **Establish a Safeguarding Implementation Group made up of leaders and professional experts to drive their Safeguarding Implementation Plan and oversee their safeguarding practices.** 4. **Develop and publish a Safeguarding Implementation Plan for a period of three years with an annual review and update.** 5. **Provide adequate resources, recruit, and support suitably trained and experienced safeguarding personnel to deliver their safeguarding services at every level including that of the parish and other ministries and services.** | |
| **LGC3 – Ministry and Culture – the Church body will:**   1. **Identify, prevent, and mitigate safeguarding risks in its structures, culture, and practice of ministry.** 2. **Regularly support and participate in any safeguarding training that is provided.** 3. **Actively promote the “Caring for Others” pastoral and personal conduct standards agreed by the Bishops Conference in April 2020, and the Integrity in Ministry standards produced by the Conference of Religious.** 4. **Seek to continuously improve its practices by focusing on and learning from the outcomes of its responses to safeguarding cases.** | |
| **LGC4 – Ministry and Culture – the Church body’s leadership will:**   1. **Encourage and support a culture of transparency through their promotion of the communications standards.** 2. **Adhere to information sharing practices and record creation policies that have been agreed nationally.** 3. **Promote constructive engagement with the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. LGC1, LGC2, LGC3, LGC4) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 2 - Communicating the Church’s Safeguarding Message** | |
| **CMS1 – The Church body will:**   1. **Have a written plan that describes how it will communicate its safeguarding messages, to whom, and in what manner.** 2. **Regularly update its communication plan, taking account of developments in its practice.** 3. **Link to other Church bodies and organisations to promote a safer environment within the Church and local community.** | |
| **CMS2 – The leadership of the Church body will:**   1. **Actively engage with volunteers, parents, and guardians, adults at risk and children and young people, when deciding how to communicate their safeguarding messages most effectively.** 2. **Promote an understanding of their commitment to effective safeguarding amongst those that they serve, and to the wider public.** 3. **Demonstrate that they own the safeguarding messages that they produce.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. CMS1 and CMS2) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 3 - Engaging with and Caring for those who report having been harmed** | |
| **EC1 – The Church body will:**   1. **Respond to any disclosure of abuse with compassion and care, seeking to provide signposting as appropriate to support and advice, and offer pastoral care tailored to the needs of the individual.** 2. **Establish access to personnel with training relevant to specific needs, to deliver professional mental health and other appropriate support when required.** 3. **Collaborate with other organisations, both voluntary and statutory, who specialise in this area of work.** 4. **Look to learn from the experience of those that are provided with a service, to confirm that it is meeting their needs.** 5. **Reflect on any disclosures that it receives with a view to drawing learning from them to inform the CSSA and future safeguarding practice across the One Church.** | |
| **EC2 – The leadership of the Church body will:**   1. **Actively reflect upon their response to those who report that they have been harmed, to enhance their commitment to it being compassionate and caring, and improving their practice.** 2. **Engage with those that report harm to try to learn from their experiences.** 3. **Support development in their practice that is aimed at enhancing a compassionate and caring response.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. EC1 and EC2) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 4 - Effective Management of Allegations and Concerns** | |
| **EF1 – The Church body will:**   1. **Ensure that it receives and responds to allegations in line with the nationally agreed policies.** 2. **Receive allegations and concerns respectfully, identifying and addressing the difficulties faced by those making disclosures and those receiving and responding to them.** 3. **Will always collect such information into an allegation as necessary, providing that this does not conflict with, or jeopardise the actions to be taken by the statutory authorities.** 4. **Provide support for those disclosing or raising a concern, and those against whom an allegation or concern is raised.** 5. **Maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality in respect of allegations or concerns, in line with accepted standards.** 6. **Keep accurate records of any allegations disclosed in accordance with data protection principles, national policies and procedures, and in a way that makes the information recorded easily accessible.** | |
| **EF2 – The Church body will:**   1. **Ensure that all allegations of abuse are passed on without delay to the appropriate statutory authorities for investigation.** 2. **Comply with the stipulations of Vos Estis Lux Mundi (2019) and the CDF’s Vademecum (2022) regarding responding to and supporting those who report having been harmed.** 3. **Where relevant, inform the CSSA of the existence of the allegations and share with them the details that would enable them to provide support if required.** 4. **Inform the trustees of the existence of allegations and confirm the responses being made.** 5. **Routinely seek to draw and share learning from any concerns that are raised as a way of developing its own and the wider ‘One Church’ practice.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. EF1 and EF2) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 5 - Management and Support of Subjects of Allegations and Concerns (respondents)** | |
| **SMR 1 Management-The Church body will:**   1. **Have access to personnel that have been trained in providing management, monitoring and support of respondents.** 2. **Ensure that any canonical investigation into an allegation will take place in compliance with can. 1717 §§1- 3, other relevant provisions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and any lawfully promulgated revisions, Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela (as amended in 2010), Vos Estis Lux Mundi (2019), and the CDF’s Vademecum (2020).** 3. **Access suitably accredited professionals to conduct risk assessments to inform the provision of safeguarding plans.** 4. **Seek advice and guidance from the CSSA when faced with a need to create and put in place a safeguarding plan for individuals with roles within the Church, without abrogation of responsibility by the Church body for putting plans in place.** 5. **Establish effective mechanisms for regular review of continuing safeguarding plans.** 6. **Maintain confidentiality whilst meeting disclosure requirements to statutory and canonical authorities.** 7. **On completion of any statutory investigation, the Church body will take forward the preliminary investigation in compliance with can. 1717 §§1- 3 and can. 695 (where applicable) and the relevant provisions of Vos Estis Lux Mundi (2019) and other applicable law and instruction from the Holy See.** | |
| **SMR2 Support – The Church body will:**   * 1. **Adhere to national policies and/or practice guidance that set out how a respondent is to be informed when an allegation has been made, and supported thereafter.**   2. **Be mindful of the impact on the wellbeing of the respondent and appoint a support person with the responsibility for listening to and addressing the pastoral needs of the respondent.**   3. **Access suitably accredited professionals to deliver professional mental health and other appropriate support when required.**   4. **Ensure that the respondent has access to suitable legal representation when subject to statutory/canonical investigation.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. SMR1 and SMR2) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 6 - Robust Human Resource Management** | |
| **HRM1 Recruitment – The Church body will:**   1. **Ensure that all selection and screening procedures have been completed and the results acted upon.** 2. **Require all overseas personnel, and those that are new to ministry, to have received training in the safeguarding standards and to have a good understanding of their content, prior to being involved in active ministry.** 3. **Require the completion of all vetting checks in a timely way.** 4. **Keep accurate records of those who have committed offences, noting their location, and management plans, and sharing this information with the CSSA upon request** | |
| **HRM2 Human Resource Management and Support – The Church body will:**   1. **Create and publish a complaints policy that sets down how a complaint can be made, and how it will be responded to.** 2. **Respond to all complaints in a way that aims to achieve an early resolution.**    1. **Ensure that the whistle blowing policy is readily available to all personnel to enable them to report a concern.** 3. **Provide or access training in the supervision and management of known or suspected offenders.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. HMR1 and HMR2) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 7 - Training and Support for Safeguarding** | |
| **TS1 Training – The Church body will:**   1. **Ensure that all its members who require it, including those in formation, have access to and avail themselves of nationally agreed safeguarding training to support their contribution to the Church body’s safeguarding practice.** 2. **Look at ways in which the specific training needs of key personnel, such as safeguarding leads or those in leadership roles, can be met.** 3. **Regularly review what training is provided and seek ways in which this can be developed further.** 4. **Produce a training needs analysis to facilitate the provision of training.** 5. **Avail themselves of locally provided safeguarding training from relevant organisations in the area.** 6. **Keep records of those who avail themselves of training opportunities and proactively engage with those who do not attend.** | |
| **TS2 Support – The Leadership of the Church body will:**   1. **Prioritise the provision of effective safeguarding training which delivers and promotes critical reflection on practice.** 2. **Raise an alert to its trustees and notify the CSSA on any failures to meet its training requirements which may impact negatively on its practice.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. TS1 and TS2) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **Standard 8 - Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement** | |
| **QA1 Quality Assurance – The Church body will:**   1. **Put in place and maintain arrangements that will evaluate compliance with the agreed safeguarding standards in all its various activities.** 2. **Proactively engage with and hear the voice of those who report having been harmed to inform and improve practice.** 3. **Regularly track the level of compliance as shown by its own auditing processes.** 4. **Report any deficits in its compliance to the agreed standards along with details of any actions to be taken to address the situation to the competent ordinary or superior, to its trustees, and to the Catholic Safeguarding Standards** 5. **Analyse concerns and allegations, and complaints received and create innovative ways in which it can draw learning from its practice to build improvements.** | |
| **QA2 Continuous Improvement – The Church body will:**   1. **Create a three-year rolling safeguarding implementation plan.** 2. **Specify who is responsible for implementing agreed actions within the plan.** 3. **Make available the necessary resources to track and complete the agreed actions.** 4. **Produce and publish an annual safeguarding report for members, trustees, and other stakeholders.** 5. **Regularly review its implementation of and adherence to the national mandatory safeguarding policies (at least every three years).** | |
| **QA3 Continuous Improvement – The Church body will:**   1. **Facilitate the independent review of their compliance with the safeguarding standards undertaken by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) or the subcontractor appointed by the CSSA in accordance with the contractual agreement between them.** 2. **Adopt the recommendations arising from any CSSA review incorporating these into its safeguarding implementation plan.** 3. **Provide updates to the CSSA on progress in implementing the recommendations.** 4. **Publish any CSSA review and report this to its stakeholders.** | |
| How well are we meeting the standard? (please make reference to each sub-section of the standard i.e. QA1, QA2 or QA3) | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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| **OVERALL EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS & SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE** | |
| How well are we implementing the standards as a whole? | Evidence (bullet-points) |
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| What are we doing well? | |
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| What do we need to develop? | |
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**DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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| **Development Need** | **Action** | **Action owner** | **Timescale** |
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