



Jesuit Safeguarding Office Annual Report 2024

Focus of work and actions completed

1. Safeguarding Committee

In 2024 the committee met on 27th June, 5th September & 6th November. A new chairperson, Margaret Rooney, attended the November meeting. Other members are Suzanne Phelan, David Moriarty, Pat Coyle, Terry Howard SJ, and the staff of the safeguarding office.

The Committee is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are kept up-to-date and that there is a communication plan to ensure relevant stakeholders are aware of the policies. The Committee oversees the delivery of the safeguarding training plan. It assists and advises the Safeguarding Office with the appraisal of the annual self-audit returns and the development of a strategy to address any issues arising from the audits.

The area of policy, training and self-audits is addressed below.

2. Safeguarding Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement

In November 2024, we revised our child safeguarding statement in line with statutory policy. This can be accessed on our website www.jesuit.ie. The statement includes an assessment of the risks identified associated with work and ministry with minors, and the procedures we have to mitigate those risks. It is still required that local risk assessments of activities take place in line with our Jesuit Safeguarding Procedures.

In June 2024, the National Board for Safeguarding Children published [**A Safe and Welcoming Church; Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2024**](#). The Jesuits are signatories to this policy and it is displayed on www.jesuit.ie.

The Safeguarding Committee is overseeing a revision of the Jesuit Manual of Safeguarding Procedures which accompanies the above policy.

3. Training and awareness raising

- The Safeguarding Office delivered a full-day training on Safeguarding Children on 29th August.
- The Office delivered a half-day training on Safeguarding Adults at Risk of Abuse on 27th September.
- Jesuit community visitation and safeguarding input: Safeguarding office staff, Saoirse Fox and Sinead Dwyer, visited all nine Jesuit communities between September and December. This was the second year of delivering an annual safeguarding update to

Jesuits in their own community. The annual input replaces the full-day training every three years. The main focus for 2024 was on safeguarding adults at risk of abuse. The session also included a brief refresher on the previous year's content – the role of the Mandated Person in the Children First Act (2015).

4. Local Safeguarding Representative

Every Jesuit Community and Work has a nominated person who is responsible for raising awareness of safeguarding in their area. This role is the local safeguarding representative (LSR). An online meeting was held with LSRs and the Jesuit Safeguarding Office on 25th January 2024. The completion of annual safeguarding self-audits were discussed as was national and church safeguarding developments. JRS Assistant Director gave input to the group on the process of completing a local hazard/risk assessment when undertaking activities with children and young people.

5. Annual Self Audit

The 2023 annual audit was completed with no areas of concern noted. This is in part explained by the low level of activity with children and young people. The Jesuit Refugee Service is an exception and much of its work takes place under the governance of other agencies. The 2024 audit forms are being sent in February 2025 and will be accompanied by site visits by the safeguarding office during the year.

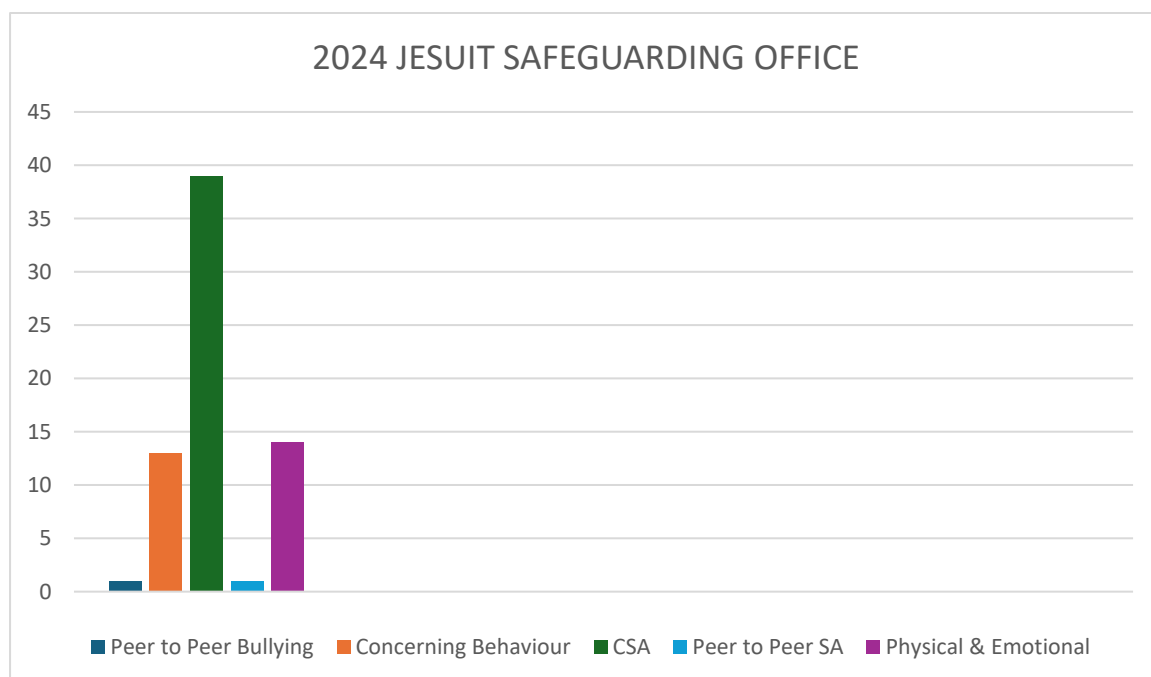
Jesuit Safeguarding Office Case Management Report 2024

The work of the Safeguarding Office in 2024 began with preparations for the publication of "*Fr Joseph Marmion SJ, His abuse, the harm caused, and Jesuit accountability: A Narrative Record*", a joint publication between the Jesuits and a past pupil steering group. This document was accompanied by the related naming of two other Jesuits in connection with child sexual abuse. On the date of the publication of that document (08/02/24), the Jesuits advised of the formation of an independent Working Group to assist the Jesuit Irish Province with the task of deciding which further names of deceased Jesuits accused of child sexual abuse could be communicated on publicly. This step of naming more such Jesuits publicly will take place in early 2025.

In 2024, the Safeguarding Office was in contact with 62 new individuals who wished to raise complaints or concerns. A further six people raised redress claims through their solicitor but did not contact the Jesuits directly.

The individuals who contacted the office raised concerns or complaints that can be categorised into the following:

- Child sexual abuse complaints and includes contact from people who say they were abused themselves or from a 3rd party who says that they know of the abuse of another named person.
- Complaints of physical or emotional abuse
- Peer to peer abuse a) sexualised b) bullying
- In the “other” category we include a) concerning behaviour of an adult in authority that is not necessarily abuse, b) a family member who is concerned that a person in their family was abused but does not have any information to confirm this, c) a person who was impacted by the witnessing of abusive practices.

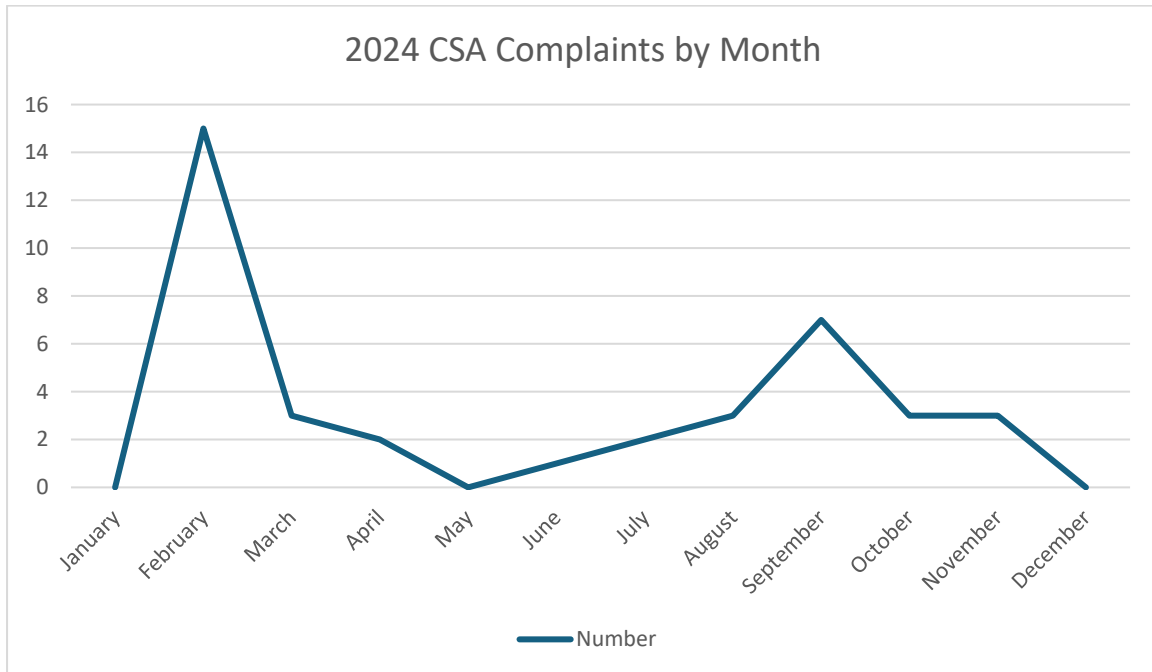


The following graph depicts the numbers of complaints of child sexual abuse raised each month in 2024. The spike in February can be explained by the publication referenced above. The upsurge in September is most likely understood by the publication of the Department of Education’s Scoping Inquiry into abuse at religious run schools.

It should be noted that a broad interpretation is taken in the Jesuit Safeguarding Office of what is to be included as a CSA complaint. Alongside detailed accounts of sexual abuse, the office includes in CSA complaint numbers:

- If a person states they were sexually abused but gives no other detail and as such, the office is not able to say if the behaviour would be appraised by civil authorities as sexual abuse.
- A third party report that a person known to them was sexually abused
- The administration of physical punishment which the complainant believes had a sexual intent to it
- Grooming behaviours that can reasonably be understood as sexually motivated behaviours

- Complaints that have been inquired into and not upheld through civil or canonical processes



While a number of the people who contacted the office wished to simply raise their concern or complaint and did not need or wish for further support, approximately half of the new contacts engaged on a more substantial level.

This involved for a number of people:

- Regular phone contact
- Face-to-face meetings
- Accessing funding for therapy, also for family members for a small number
- Accessing the redress scheme

Breakdown of CSA cases known to the Jesuit Safeguarding Office by the end of 2024:

- Allegations have been made against 48 individuals who were Jesuits at the time of the alleged abuse
- A total of 218 allegations have been made against these 48 individuals