



Jesuit Safeguarding Office Annual Report 2025

Foreword

The 2025 annual report from the Jesuit Safeguarding Office provides an overview of the diverse activities of the Safeguarding Office. These activities include the recording and case management of allegations, victim/survivor support, reparative responses, awareness raising, policy and preventative strategies development, and safeguarding education and training.

We recognise and acknowledge the harm caused to victim/survivors. The moving encounters with those who were harmed, their pain and trauma, have deeply shaken us. This requires that actions for safeguarding be central to how Jesuits, lay-collaborators, volunteers, and the apostolic works of the Irish Jesuits, carry out their pastoral, spiritual, educational, and social activities.

This report is the first following the public naming of 15 Jesuits for child sexual abuse in February 2025 and the figures in this report reflect the impact of that naming. As well as accompanying survivors, the Safeguarding Office worked intensively on updating policies in 2025. We updated our child safeguarding procedures in light of the 2024 National Board policy and procedures revision. The year 2025 also saw the beginning of a detailed consultation process with Jesuits and lay collaborators to formulate, from the bottom up, an ethics in ministry policy.

On behalf of the Society of Jesus in Ireland, I would like to thank Ms. Saoirse Fox, Delegate for Safeguarding and Professional Standards and the manager of the Safeguarding Office, Ms. Sinead Dwyer, and Roisin Purcell for their tireless work accompanying those harmed and their expertise building robust structures to ensure best practice going forward. I would also like to take the opportunity afforded by the publication of this report to thank the Safeguarding Committee under its chair, Ms Margaret Rooney, for the support, advice, and oversight they give to the Office.

Rebuilding trust in the Church and our institutions will be a long process, but we hope the transparency and communication of everything we are doing in the area of safeguarding will be a step towards it. We hope that our annual report containing updated figures and safeguarding information will show our commitment to providing safe spaces and safe relationships for the children and adults with whom we minister and work. It is an important part of our ongoing process of atoning for past failures and the creation of real change for the future.

Fr. Shane Daly SJ
Provincial

Introduction

The Jesuits in Ireland are fully committed to providing safe spaces and ensuring safe relationships for the children and adults with whom we minister and work.

The Jesuits recognise failings of the past which allowed abuse to happen and seek to ensure that survivors are supported.

These aims are achieved primarily through the work of the Jesuit Safeguarding Office:

- Dealing with complaints and concerns about child protection matters, reporting to the civil authorities, and advising the Provincial on any protective measures necessary to protect children from abuse.
- Offering pastoral and reparative responses to people who experienced abuse by Jesuits or our staff.
- Ensuring ongoing good practice in ministry with children and other vulnerable groups.
- Providing safeguarding training for members, employees and volunteers.
- Ensuring that all members in active ministry and employees and volunteers working with children and/or “adults at risk of abuse” have undergone vetting and a safe recruitment process.

1. Safeguarding Committee

This Committee, comprised of external and internal members offering a variety of expertise, assists the work of the Safeguarding Office in the area of policy and procedure, strategy, training, safeguarding communications, and appraising the implementation of safeguarding practice across the Irish Province.

In 2025 the committee met on 26th March, 12th August and the 8th December 2025.

The focus of the work of the committee in 2025 was:

- The revision of our safeguarding procedures, which are now contained across three handbooks;
- Continuing to build the local safeguarding representative network;
- The development of a five-year strategic plan.

The Safeguarding Strategic Plan can be accessed at www.jesuit.ie under “Safeguarding Documents”.

2. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Revision

In 2024, the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland revised the One Church Policy naming it “A Safe and Welcoming Church: Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland”. The Jesuits are a signatory to this policy.

In 2025, the safeguarding office revised our procedures to be in tandem with the one-church policy. The Jesuit Safeguarding Manual has now been replaced by three handbooks. They are organised under the three policy standards:

1. Handbook introducing the Jesuit Safeguarding Policy and Procedures: Leadership, Governance and Accountability
2. Nurturing a Culture of Safeguarding
3. Responding Pastorally and Reporting According to Civil and Canon Law

The three handbooks can be accessed here: <https://jesuit.ie/safeguarding-documents/>

3. Safeguarding Training

The Director of Safeguarding, Saoirse Fox, delivered seven safeguarding sessions to Jesuit communities between September and December 2025. This was the third year of delivering the annual safeguarding session to Jesuits in their own community which coincides with Provincial's annual visitations. The theme of this year's session was ethical standards and professional practice. In addition, a safeguarding awareness-raising session was held for all staff at Manresa Spirituality Centre in December 2025 as was a session with retreat staff earlier in the year.

4. Local Safeguarding Representative (LSR)

Every Jesuit Community and Work has a nominated person who is responsible for raising awareness of safeguarding in their area. This person is known as the local safeguarding representative (LSR). A half-day event was held on 24th September 2025, where the LSRs came together with the members of the Safeguarding Committee. Sessions were facilitated on the revised safeguarding handbooks, the role of the LSR, and the code of conduct was discussed to see how it could be enhanced.

5. Annual Self-Audit

The 2024 safeguarding self-audit forms were sent out in February 2025. Support completing these was offered in-person. When self-audit returns were analysed, no major gaps were noted.

6. Advice and Guidance

The safeguarding office staff were contacted on regular occasions during the year for advice on matters such as: Developing local protocols around safeguarding practice, vetting requirements, practice issues. People also contact the office to seek advice on how to respond and report disclosures that are non-Jesuit related.

Members of the public also contact the office with general questions and concerns related to the historical abuse.

7. Professional Standards (“Integrity in Ministry”)

The director of safeguarding, Saoirse Fox, holds responsibility in the Province for not only safeguarding but also professional standards in ministry. A major project for 2025-2026 is the writing of ethical standards in ministry and the associated support and development work. There is a steering group in place to drive this project. In 2025, the steering group met twice and consultation with Jesuits about the standards took place during the year. It is intended that related written material will be produced in 2026 (see action plan below).

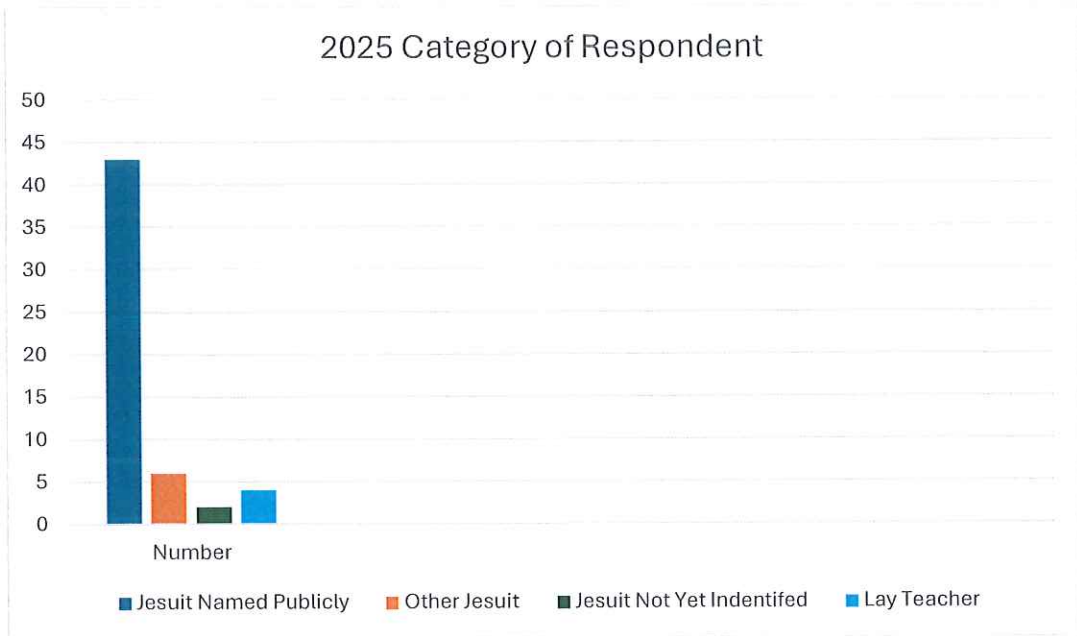
Saoirse attended the JCEP (Jesuit Conference of Europe) Safeguarding Delegates 3-day meeting in Portugal in October. The theme for this meeting was spiritual abuse and the creation of healthy environments and relationships. This is a topic that is generating a lot of discussion at present in the church safeguarding sector. It is positive that there has been public commentary in recent times that acknowledges the abuse of female religious and other adults in faith-based contexts. This raises awareness of this type of harm and can make it easier for people to disclose such experiences that they have had.

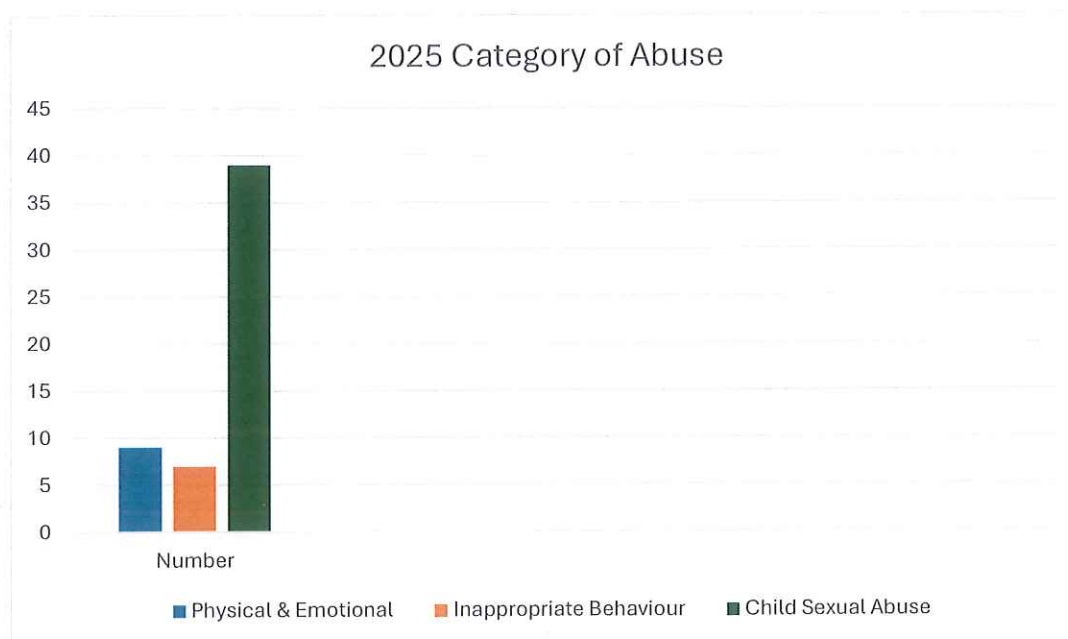
Jesuit Safeguarding Office Case Management Report 2025

On 12th February 2025, the Irish Jesuit Province publicly named 15 deceased members who were the subject of child sexual abuse complaints. This work was assisted by an Independent Working Group that reviewed case materials and made recommendations on the “naming”. This communication was preceded by a public statement in 2021 when one deceased Jesuit was named and in 2024, when two were publicly disclosed. This makes a total of 18 names that have been shared with the public.

In 2025, 51 people not previously known to the Jesuits made contact to bring forward complaints of child abuse. It is safe to believe that the public communication in February was the catalyst for most people bringing forward their accounts of abuse [see graph below. Four of the 51 people named two Jesuits as people who harmed or attempted to harm them.

- The majority (43/55) of the new complaints were made against 14 of the 18 who have been named publicly.
- 6 of the complaints were made against other Jesuits
- 2 were made against Jesuits whose names have not yet been identified
- 4 of the complaints were against lay teachers
- 9 of the complaints were of physical and emotional abuse
- 7 were complaints of inappropriate behaviour that was not yet sexual abuse.
- The remaining complaints related to child sexual abuse (39)





Overview of reparative responses made by the Jesuits and support offered

As stated above, 51 new individuals made their experiences of harm and abuse known to the Jesuits in 2025.

Included in the public statement of February 2025 was an invitation for those who experienced abuse to consider taking up some of the reparative responses offered by the Jesuits. Some of these responses are: funding for counselling; a redress scheme; professional support provided by staff of the safeguarding office; sharing of information from our files; acknowledgements and apologies; meeting with a senior Jesuit usually the Provincial.

Of the 51 people who made contact in 2025, 9 accessed the redress scheme via a solicitor and did not make direct contact with the Jesuits.

The remaining 42 engaged with the safeguarding office to varying extents dependent on their needs. About a fifth contacted once only to have their account put on record. All others were in contact over longer periods, receiving assistance with organising therapy, talking by phone or meeting safeguarding office staff for support and to explore needs and wishes, and being enabled to access the redress scheme.

About a quarter of the people who contact the safeguarding office reach a point where they would like to meet the Provincial. A number of these meetings were facilitated in 2025 where the Provincial bears witness to the person's recounting of their abuse and the impact and responds to it with acceptances of responsibility and personal apologies.

Two people in 2025 expressed their discontent with the response of the safeguarding office and ended contact.

CSA cases known to the Jesuit Safeguarding Office by the end of 2025

The figures outlined above (51), when added to the number of people in 2024 (62) who came forward to the Jesuits with their experiences of abuse, makes 113. This is a very significant number of people over a two-year period who for the first time ensured the Jesuits knew that they, too, were abused. It is a key part of our response structure that people are offered choice in how and to what extent they engage with the Jesuits. An analysis of the contact by the office shows that there was a high level of engagement with many.

Across these two years, just 15 of the 113 opted to access redress alone via a solicitor. All others made direct contact with the Jesuits, usually through the safeguarding office.

Current abuse statistics at the end of 2025 since records began

- A total of 250 CSA allegations have been made against 50 individuals who were Jesuits at the time of the alleged abuse.

Action Plan for 2026

The following actions are identified from the 2025-29 Safeguarding Strategic Plan and from our annual self-audit process as being priorities for this year:

Item number	Action	Corresponds with Strategic Plan 2025-2029
1	To continue to review the impact of the Jesuit public communications (2021-2025) about child abuse and to renew the invitation in 2026 for those people harmed to consider contacting the Jesuits.	Priority Area 5.1 and 5.2
2	Revise and update the Jesuit Irish Province Child Safeguarding Statement as per Children First Act 2015.	Priority Area 5.2 and 5.3
3	Continue to support and build the LSR Network through online meetings and on-site visits. The aim of this is to optimise safeguarding capacities locally.	Priority Area 5.3
4	Deliver the 2026 training plan	Priority Area 5.3 and 5.4

5	Create a new safeguarding induction pack	Priority Area 5.3 and 5.4
6	In early 2026, a safeguarding communication plan will be written for 2026-27 that will include the internal communication of safeguarding information and communications with external stakeholders.	Priority Area 5.2
7	Development of written guidance on ethical standards in ministry and the associated support and development work	Priority Area 5.3

Signed



Saoirse Fox
Director of Safeguarding & Professional Standards