



**SAFEGUARDING
COMMISSION**

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

safeguarding.mt

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FOREWORD

The Safeguarding Commission is responsible for promoting safe environments within the Church in Malta. This is accomplished through the implementation of preventive practices and training, as well as the provision of victim care and advocacy. The Commission is also responsible for handling complaints, conducting preliminary investigations and risk assessments, and ensuring the wellbeing of those who have filed complaints, the alleged victims, as well as those who are the subjects of complaint.

In 2023, the Safeguarding Commission established three teams within the Safeguarding Office to ensure separation of roles and responsibilities: the prevention and training team, the victim care and advocacy team and the investigation and assessment team.

The Head of Safeguarding, Mr Mark Pellicano, is now responsible for overseeing the Safeguarding Office, acting as the main liaison with Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna and the Conference of Major Religious Superiors, and serving as the direct link between all Church entities, statutory authorities and the Safeguarding Commission. He also coordinates with the wellbeing offices of the Ordinaries to ensure that the wellbeing of the subjects of complaint is maintained.

Safeguarding concerns referred to the Safeguarding Commission are investigated and assessed by a team of professionals who draw up a report which is scrutinised by the Safeguarding Advisory Board. The Board, composed of professionals from various fields — including psychiatry, psychology, social work, paediatrics and counselling — is entrusted by the Church in Malta to work autonomously from the structures of the Church. The conclusions and recommendations agreed upon by the Safeguarding Advisory Board are then presented to the Archbishop of Malta and/or Provincial who is responsible for determining what action, if any, should be taken against clerics or laypersons involved and whether the matter ought to be referred to the Holy See.

In 2023, the Safeguarding Commission carried out background checks on more than 5,500 people and provided 22 training sessions to over 1,300 Church personnel. It also embarked on two awareness campaigns. The Safeguarding Commission received 36 new referrals and concluded 26 cases.



Mr Mark Pellicano
Head of Safeguarding

01

CHANGE IN PERSONNEL

In April 2023, Mr Mark Pellicano was appointed by Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna as the new Head of the Safeguarding Commission. Mr Pellicano has extensive experience in the social field and holds a warrant in both social work and counselling. In his previous role, he served as Senior Manager of Children's Services at Fondazzjoni Sebħ, a Church organisation providing residential care for children unable to live with their families. Mr Pellicano offers counselling services at Richmond Foundation and lectures at the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at the University of Malta. He was previously employed as Correctional Assistant Manager within Malta's Prisons and as Services Coordinator at Victim Support Malta. He also served as vice president of the Malta Association for the Counselling Profession.

Moreover, the roles and functions of the safeguarding officers were also adjusted. Their corresponding duties, responsibilities, as well as their job specifications, have been refined and redesigned to be more effective with respect to the need of the Commission to focus thoroughly on both the investigative function and the equally important support of victims.

Furthermore, the training and research aspects are also being reinforced, and at the same time the digital presence is also being strengthened.

02

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Throughout 2023, the Head of Safeguarding held various meetings with key stakeholders to improve the safeguarding policy so that it can further reflect the principal guidelines of transparency, accountability, integrity and responsibility. The proposed changes include the new organisational structure of the Safeguarding Commission that better defines each person's role, responsibilities, as well as establishing separation of powers within the Commission.

To further ensure that the principal guidelines of safeguarding are met, another proposal was to establish a new role for a chairperson within the Safeguarding Advisory Board who will present the conclusions and recommendations of investigations to the Head of Safeguarding. The proposed organisational structure is available in Appendix 2.

03

MEETINGS WITH VARIOUS ENTITIES

The Head of Safeguarding held various meetings with key stakeholders aimed at enhancing collaboration between the Safeguarding Commission and other entities, and consulting with them on how to create, ensure and maintain a safe Church for all those who engage with it.

The meetings were held with:

- Archbishop's Delegate for Work and Life in Parishes
- Archbishop's Seminary
- Communications Office of the Archdiocese of Malta
- Dar tal-Providenza
- DISCERN
- Episcopal Vicar for Clergy and Parishes
- Episcopal Vicar for Diaconia
- Finance Section of the Archdiocese of Malta
- Fondazzjoni Sebħ
- Human Resources Unit of the Archdiocese of Malta
- Internal Audit Office of the Archdiocese of Malta
- Malta Catholic Youth Network (MCYN)
- Maltese Episcopal Conference
- Metropolitan Tribunal
- Parish Priests' Council
- Pastoral Formation Institute (PFI)
- Property Section of the Archdiocese of Malta
- Secretariat for Catholic Education
- The Association of Catholic Groups and Movements (FORUM)

04

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

In June 2023, the Head of Safeguarding, together with the Senior Safeguarding Officer, attended a conference in Rome on how to sustain organisational accountability. The conference was organised by the International Safeguarding Conference at the Pontifical Gregorian University.

In July, Jodie Crisafulli and Karen Larkman, two Safeguarding Directors from the Diocese of Broken Bay and the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia, came to Malta as part of a European study tour. They conducted extensive meetings with the Head of Safeguarding and the Senior Safeguarding Officer about how the structures within the Safeguarding Commission can be enhanced. The delegation also had the opportunity to meet Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna.

In November, the Head of Safeguarding visited Ireland, where he held meetings in Dublin and Maynooth with the following:

- Rev. Michael Casai SDB – Board member of the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service of the Archdiocese of Dublin
- Andrew Fagan – Director and Designated Liaison Person of the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service of the Archdiocese of Dublin
- Una Allen – Director at Towards Peace
- Teresa Devlin – Chief Executive Officer at the National Board for Safeguarding
- Dr Niall Moore – Director of Training and Support at the National Board for Safeguarding
- Peter Kieran - Director of Safeguarding at the National Board for Safeguarding
- Dublin Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meeting

05

PREVENTION AND TRAINING

In 2023, the Prevention and Training Team was established within the Safeguarding Office of the Safeguarding Commission. The main aim of this team is to raise awareness about safeguarding practices within the Church, deliver training and to carry out vetting exercises on all personnel entrusted with a position within the Church in Malta. It also seeks to empower alleged victims to file their complaints with the Safeguarding Commission. A junior safeguarding officer was employed within the Prevention and Training Team with the following main responsibilities:

- Organising and holding prevention programmes
- Carrying out vetting and compliance procedures
- Enhancing awareness through social media and the website
- Liaising with educational entities providing training in Safeguarding
- Carrying out administrative tasks

In the course of 2023, the Prevention and Training Team delivered 22 training sessions to more than 1,300 Church personnel. Lectures were also delivered to students at the University of Malta and the Malta University Consulting.

Furthermore, the Prevention and Training Team submitted 115 applications to the Courts of Malta to establish whether individuals about to be entrusted with a position within the Church's structures were listed on the Offenders' Register which falls under the Protection of Minors (Registration) Act (POMA). The applications covered a total of 5,589 Church personnel. Every application includes a list of names. In total, the 115 applications included 5,589 names.

The Prevention and Training Team also vetted 26 applications for clergymen making temporary visits to Malta to carry out pastoral work in the Archdiocese of Malta. This vetting was conducted to ensure they had no history of safeguarding issues within their ministry.

The Prevention and Training Team also carried out awareness campaigns about safeguarding. From September 2023, weekly posts were being uploaded on various social media platforms and the Safeguarding Commission website. Another campaign included the design and distribution of a safeguarding information poster that was attached to all the notice boards of churches and parish offices around Malta. Copies of the posts and posters can be found in Appendix 3.

In 2023, the Safeguarding Commission became a member of the consultative committee of the bBrave project that delved into bullying and ostracism in the workplace. A Safeguarding Commission representative also participated as a panel member during the final conference which presented the outcomes of the project.

The Safeguarding Commission, through its Head, is also a member of the board of studies of the Certificate in Safeguarding of Children and Young People which is collaboratively provided by the Faculty of Theology and the Faculty for Social Wellbeing within the University of Malta.

06

VICTIM CARE AND ADVOCACY

One of the Safeguarding Commission's primary objectives is to take care of the victims and their relatives. The Safeguarding Commission remained in contact with all victims who requested support. This included psychosocial support, coordination of reimbursement of payments related to professional support and the referral of victims to appropriate professionals and services.

In this regard, the Commission established a Victim Care and Advocacy Team within the Safeguarding Office whose main aims are to:

- Offer a welcoming environment
- Provide psychosocial support to victims
- Accompany victims through the process
- Accompany victims to relevant authorities
- Refer to relevant services, including spiritual support if requested by the victim
- Refer to medical assistance if required
- Ensure psychosocial support to families of victims, complainants and secondary victims
- Provide guidance and support to witnesses
- Deliver post-investigation support

07

WELLBEING OF THE SUBJECT OF COMPLAINT

Recognising the importance of ensuring the wellbeing of the individuals being investigated by the Commission, the Safeguarding Commission implemented a new structure to ensure that the subjects of complaint are provided with adequate support.

The Head of Safeguarding coordinates with the Wellbeing Office of the relevant bishop or provincial to ensure that the subject of complaint receive:

- Psychosocial support
- Accompaniment throughout the process of the investigation or assessment
- Accompaniment to relevant authorities
- Referral to relevant services, including spiritual support if requested by the subject of complaint
- Referral to medical assistance if required
- Post-investigation support

08

THE SAFEGUARDING ADVISORY BOARD

Throughout 2023, members of the Safeguarding Advisory Board met on a monthly basis at the Archbishop's Curia and the Archbishop's Seminary in Rabat to discuss preliminary investigations and risk assessments. The conclusions and recommendations of all cases were presented to the Head of Safeguarding.

Additionally in 2023, the Safeguarding Advisory Board welcomed a new member, Dr Mariella Mangion, who is a Consultant Community Paediatrician with special interest in the safeguarding of children. She is the lead professional in Malta for child protection issues within the health sector and is responsible for the formulation of child protection guidelines and practices.

The composition of the Safeguarding Advisory Board in 2023 was as follows:

- Mr Mark Pellicano – Head of Safeguarding
- Dr Natalie Kenely – Senior lecturer in social work at the University of Malta
- Dr Roberta Attard – Clinical psychologist and Head of Department of Counselling at the University of Malta
- Dr Joe Cassar – Consultant Psychiatrist
- Fr Antoine Farrugia – Salesian priest and social worker
- Dr Mariella Mangion - Consultant Community Paediatrician

The Safeguarding Advisory Board received legal assistance from Dr Nicole Briffa.

09

THE SAFEGUARDING REVIEW BOARD

During 2023, two cases were referred to the Safeguarding Review Board for review.

The members of the Safeguarding Review Board include:

- Professor Nadia Delicata – Theologian, Associate Professor at the University of Malta and Chairperson of the Review Board
- Associate Professor Maureen Cole – Social work academic at the University of Malta
- Rev. Dr Kevin Schembri – Canon lawyer and senior lecturer at the University of Malta

The administrator of the Safeguarding Review Board is Ms Gillian Cachia.

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NEW PREMISES

As part of ongoing efforts, the Safeguarding Office has presented a proposal to the Archdiocese of Malta related to Church-owned premises in Floriana which could serve as the new head office of the Safeguarding Commission. These premises are conveniently situated in close proximity to both the Archbishop's Curia, the Police Headquarters and the Courts of Justice, and are easily accessible by public transport for alleged victims and subjects of complaint.

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STATISTICS OF GENERAL INQUIRIES ADDRESSED IN 2023

The Safeguarding Commission handled queries related to safeguarding matters, procedural issues, referrals to external and statutory entities, and other related matters faced by entities within the Church and by individuals.

During 2023, the Safeguarding Commission addressed 14 general inquiries that involved issues related to organisational management, pastoral ministry in parishes, referral and case discussions with external entities, as well as consultation with Church personnel on safeguarding matters.

GENERAL INQUIRIES IN 2023	
Organisational management	1
School related inquiries	3
Pastoral ministry in parishes	4
Referral and case discussions with external entities	2
Consultation with Church personnel on safeguarding matters	4
TOTAL GENERAL INQUIRIES	14

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STATISTICS OF REFERRALS RECEIVED IN 2023

Throughout 2023, the Safeguarding Commission received 36 referrals. These involved 19 cases related to victims who were minors (under the age of 18) at the time of the alleged abuse, while a further 17 cases involved adults who claimed to be in a vulnerable position when the abuse allegedly took place.

For the purposes of this document, historical cases refer to allegations that were referred to the Safeguarding Commission and allegedly took place more than 10 years ago. Out of the 36 referrals received by the Safeguarding Commission in 2023, seven were historical cases. These included four alleged victims who at the time of the abuse were vulnerable adults, and three alleged victims who were minors when the alleged abuse took place.

Of the 19 referrals involving minors, four involved nuns/religious priests, while 15 involved laypersons. Among the 17 cases involving vulnerable adults, four involved diocesan priests, eight involved religious, and five involved laypersons.

REFERRALS RECEIVED IN 2023			
Minors	19	Nuns/Religious priests	4
		Laypersons	15
3 out of 19 were historical cases			
Vulnerable Adults	17	Diocesan priests	4
		Nuns/Religious priests	8
		Laypersons	5
4 out of 17 were historical cases			
TOTAL REFERRALS RECEIVED			36

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STATISTICS OF COMPLAINTS CONCLUDED IN 2023

In 2023, the Safeguarding Commission concluded 26 cases: 18 involving minors and eight involving vulnerable adults. Among the cases concluded in 2023, 19 had been referred to the Safeguarding Commission in recent years.

CASES INVOLVING MINORS

Of the 18 cases involving minors, four were found to be substantiated, one was found to be partially substantiated, while one was unsubstantiated.

One case was not a safeguarding concern and three cases were investigated internally by the organisation concerned.

Two of the cases were referred to the personal Bishop of the subjects of complaint out of Malta. A further six cases required no further action. Nine of the 18 cases involving minors were historical cases.

Four of the subjects of complaint in cases involving minors were diocesan priests, seven were religious and seven were laypersons.

CASES INVOLVING VULNERABLE ADULTS

Regarding the eight cases involving vulnerable adults, four were found to be substantiated. One case was not a safeguarding concern, and another was referred to the personal Bishop of the subject of complaint out of Malta. Two cases required no further action. Four of the eight cases involving vulnerable adults were of a historical nature.

Two of the subjects of complaint involving vulnerable adults were diocesan priests, two were religious and four were laypersons.

ASSESSMENTS CONCLUDED IN 2023

	Minors	Vulnerable Adults
Total assessments	18	8
Historical cases	9 out of 18	4 out of 8

OUTCOMES

	Minors	Vulnerable Adults
Substantiated	4	4
Partially substantiated	1	0
Unsubstantiated	1	0
Unfounded	0	0
Not a safeguarding concern	1	1
Investigated internally by organisation	3	0
Referred to the personal Bishop out of Malta	2	1
No further action	6	2

ROLES OF SUBJECTS OF COMPLAINT

	Minors	Vulnerable Adults
Diocesan priests	4	2
Nuns/Religious priests	7	2
Laypersons	7	4

SUBSTANTIATED CASES INVOLVING MINORS

In the four substantiated cases involving minors, two of the subjects of complaint were diocesan priests. One of the cases involved sexual abuse, emotional manipulation and a breach of professional boundaries. The other case involved sexual abuse. Restriction from public ministry was recommended in both cases. One of the diocesan priests was referred to the civil authorities.

SUBSTANTIATED COMPLAINTS INVOLVING MINORS				
Role of subject of complaint	Diocesan priests		Laypersons	
Number of cases	1	1	1	1
Allegation	Sexual abuse, emotional manipulation and breach of professional boundaries	Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse	Sexual harassment
Recommended a restriction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Was the alleged victim an adult at the time of the referral?	Yes	Yes	No	No
Case referred to civil authorities?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Reason for no referral to civil authorities	N/A	The Safeguarding Commission offered the victim to be accompanied to the police, but the victim did not want to report	N/A	N/A

In the other case, the Safeguarding Commission offered to accompany the victim to the civil authorities, but the victim, who by the time of reporting was an adult, did not wish to proceed with a police report.

The two other subjects of complaint in cases involving minors were laypersons. One of the cases involved sexual abuse, while the other case involved sexual harassment. Both cases were issued with a recommendation of restriction, and both laypersons were referred to the civil authorities.

SUBSTANTIATED CASES INVOLVING VULNERABLE ADULTS

Of the four substantiated cases involving vulnerable adults, two subjects of complaint were religious. One case involved a breach of sexual boundaries and another case involved sexual abuse. A layperson was also involved in a sexual abuse case, while another layperson was involved in a case involving breach of professional boundaries. In each case, the subjects of complaint were issued

SUBSTANTIATED COMPLAINTS INVOLVING VULNERABLE ADULTS				
Role of subject of complaint	Nuns/Religious priests		Laypersons	
Number of cases	1	1	1	1
Allegation	Breach of sexual boundaries	Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse	Breach of professional boundaries
Recommended a restriction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case referred to civil authorities?	No	No	No	No
Reason for no referral to civil authorities	Case did not merit a referral as there was no crime committed	The Safeguarding Commission offered the victim to be accompanied to the police, but the victim did not want to report	The Safeguarding Commission offered the victim to be accompanied to the police, but the victim did not want to report	Case did not merit a referral as there was no crime committed

with a recommendation of restriction from public ministry. Two of the cases did not merit a referral to the civil authorities as there was no crime committed. In the other two cases, the Safeguarding Commission offered to accompany the victims to the police, but the victims did not want to report.

OUTCOME OF ASSESMENTS

There were a total of eight substantiated cases involving either minors or vulnerable adults. One was partially substantiated, while another was unsubstantiated.

Two were not a safeguarding concern, and three were investigated internally by the relevant organisation. Three cases were referred to the personal Bishop of the subjects of complaint out of Malta. Eight required no further action.

REFERRALS WHICH THE

OUTCOME ON TOTAL ASSESMENTS CONCLUDED IN 2023	
Substantiated	8
Partially substantiated	1
Unsubstantiated	1
Not a safeguarding concern	2
Investigated internally by organisation	3
Referred to the personal Bishop out of Malta	3
No further action	8

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SAFEGUARDING COMMISSION DID NOT OBTAIN A DECREE TO INVESTIGATE

In 2023, the Safeguarding Commission received two additional referrals concerning two religious priests from different Orders. When the Safeguarding Commission requested a decree from the respective Provincials, as required by Canon Law, one of them claimed to have investigated the allegation himself, while the other referred the case to the generalate in Rome. The allegations included:

priest towards minors and adults. The case was investigated by the provincial

- An allegation that text messages of a sexual nature were sent to a parishioner by a religious priest. The case was investigated by the generalate in Rome

TERM	DESCRIPTION
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APPENDIX 1

GLOSSARY

SAFEGUARDING COMMISSION	Head of Safeguarding	The person within the Safeguarding Commission who oversees and coordinates the work of the Commission within the established parameters of the safeguarding policies.
	Safeguarding Advisory Board	A board within the Safeguarding Commission consisting of professionals who meet regularly to discuss and advise the Head of Safeguarding on Church safeguarding policies, prevention and training, victim care and advocacy, preliminary investigations and risk assessments, and the wellbeing of subjects of complaint. The board is also responsible for approving or otherwise the conclusions and recommendations of the report which is to be presented to the Ordinary following a preliminary investigation or risk assessment.
	Safeguarding Commission	The entity founded by the Maltese Episcopal Conference and the Conference of Major Religious Superiors responsible for promoting safe environments in the Church mainly through preventive practices and training, victim care and advocacy, handling of complaints, preliminary investigations and risk assessments, and following up on the wellbeing of the subjects of complaint.
	Safeguarding Office	An office within the Safeguarding Commission, consisting of professionals employed by the Church to offer day-to-day service within the safeguarding teams responsible for Prevention and Training, Victim Care and Advocacy, and Investigation and Assessment.
	Safeguarding Review Board	A board within the Safeguarding Commission consisting of professionals who, upon a request of an Ordinary, review the procedures, conclusions or recommendations of a preliminary investigation or a risk assessment.

	TERM	DESCRIPTION
TYPES OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS	Breach of boundaries	When Church personnel crosses an emotional or physical line that must be maintained in order to ensure order, safety, transparency and predictability within the Church.
	Bullying	When Church personnel repeatedly threatens or undermines a minor and/or vulnerable adult through various forms of verbal or physical behaviour, including but not limited to, spreading rumours, name calling, purposeful exclusion, making threats, and physical or verbal attacks.
	Emotional	When Church personnel emotionally or psychologically mistreats a minor and/or vulnerable adult through deliberate acts of humiliation, scare tactics, threats, ignoring, isolating, or other similar actions.
	Exploitation	When Church personnel takes advantage of an imbalance of power to control, coerce, manipulate, deceive, or simply take advantage of a minor and/or vulnerable adult.
	Grooming	When Church personnel forms a connection, builds trust, and establishes an emotional bond with a minor and/or vulnerable adult with the intention of manipulating, exploiting, or abusing them, even if that abuse, in whatever form intended, does not actually take place.
	Harassment	When Church personnel engages in a course of conduct which can reasonably be deemed as unwelcoming behaviour, which makes a minor and/or vulnerable adult feel offended, humiliated, degraded, or intimidated.
	Neglect	When Church personnel repeatedly fails to meet the physical and emotional needs of a minor and/or a vulnerable adult under one's care and responsibility.
	Physical	When Church personnel physically maltreats in any way a minor and/or vulnerable adult.
	Poor practice	When Church personnel does not meet the expected behaviour set out in this Safeguarding Policy and/or the particular policies of Church entities.
	Sexual	<p>When Church personnel leads, persuades, coerces or intimidates a minor and/or a vulnerable adult into engaging in a sexual activity that involves non-physical, physical non-penetrative and/or physical penetrative contact.</p> <p>Non-physical contact includes but is not limited to: sexual conversations; inducing or forcing a minor and/or vulnerable adult to act out sexually; the immoral acquisition, possession, exhibition, or distribution, in any way or by any means, of pornographic images of minors and/or vulnerable adults; or the recruitment or inducement of a minor and/or vulnerable adult to pose in a pornographic manner or to participate in real or simulated pornographic exhibitions.</p>

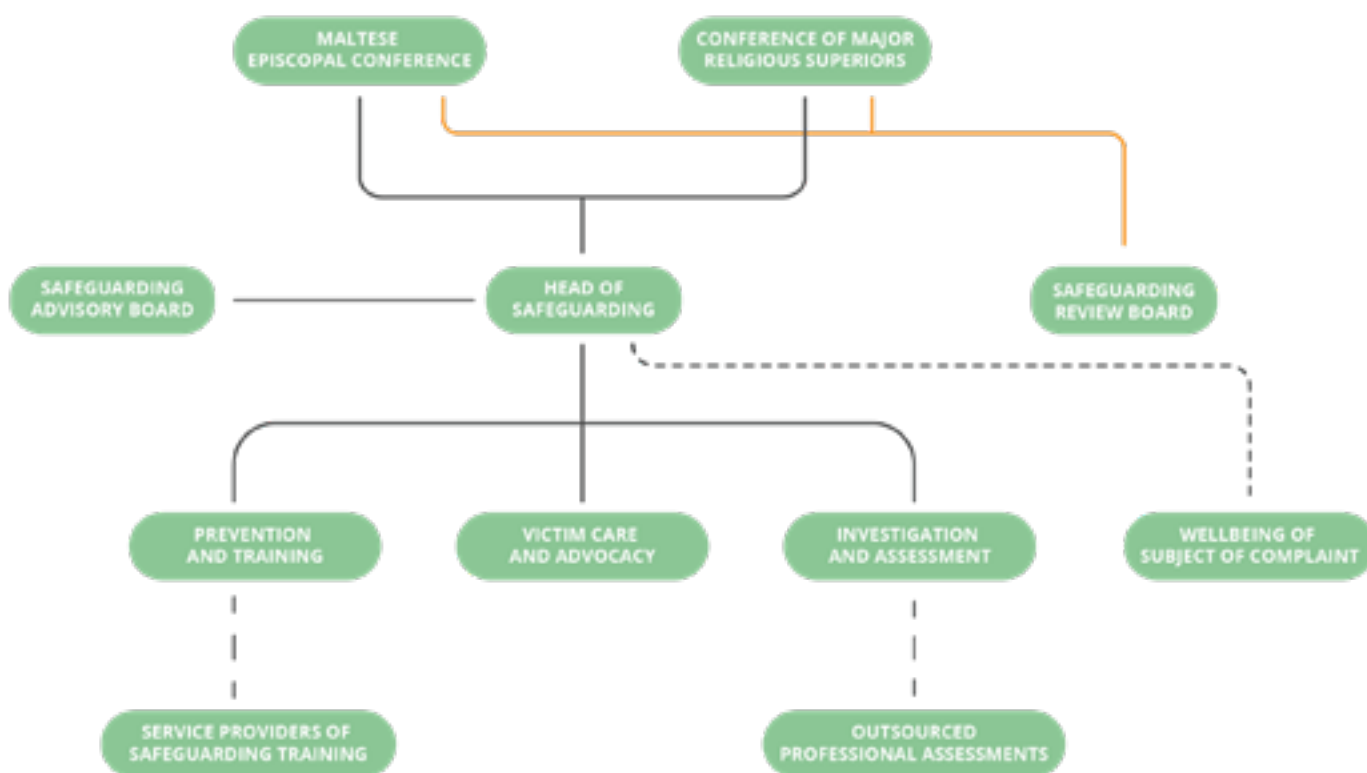
TYPES OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS	Sexual (cont.)	Physical non-penetrative contact includes but is not limited to over-clothing touching, rubbing, kissing, or masturbation. Physical penetrative contact refers to sexual penetration of any part of the body, with or without force, by a sex organ, by any other part of the body, or by a foreign object.
	Spiritual	When Church personnel engages in a systematic pattern of coercive, harmful, or controlling behaviour in a spiritual or religious context. This may include but is not limited to manipulation and exploitation, superiority or elitism, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teachings, isolation as a means of punishment, or the requirement of obedience to or by that Church personnel, suggesting that the Church personnel has some kind of 'divine' authority.

	TERM	DESCRIPTION
CONCLUSION OF A COMPLAINT	Investigated internally by the organisation	When a safeguarding concern is investigated by the HR unit of the organisation or through a formal disciplinary procedure.
	No further action	The case does not require further action or recommendations by the Safeguarding Advisory Board after the case is presented to them.
	Not a safeguarding concern	When the case presented to the Advisory Board is deemed as not falling within the remit of the Safeguarding Commission.
	Partially substantiated	Evidence was able to prove that one or more of the alleged incidents did take place, but other allegations cannot be established.
	Refer to 3rd Party	Complaints that do not relate to safeguarding concerns but still need to be dealt with by other entities, both within and outside of the Church.
	Substantiated	Evidence was able to prove that the allegation did take place.
	Unfounded	Evidence was able to establish that the allegation was false.
	Unsubstantiated	It cannot be proven if the alleged incident did or did not take place.

TERM		DESCRIPTION
OTHER DEFINITIONS	Church personnel	Refers to clergy (bishops, priests and deacons), consecrated persons, members of apostolic life and laypersons (employed or volunteers) appointed to work in pastoral activity or in supporting the Church's mission.
	Minor	Any person under the age of 18. Equivalent to a minor is any person who has the developmental age of a child or habitually lacks the use of reason.
	Pastoral activity	Any activity that involves the Catholic Church or its mission.
	Protection of Minors Act (POMA) Court Application	A request from the Voluntary Jurisdiction Section of the Civil Court (First Hall) for information which may be registered in the Register in respect of any applicant, or person who is employed, or holds any position with the same institution, establishment or organisation whether such employment or position is against payment or otherwise. This is regulated by the Protection of Minors (Registration) Act of the Laws of Malta.
	Restriction from pastoral ministry	A temporary or permanent recommendation to suspend personnel from some or all pastoral activity.
	Safeguarding training	Training to raise awareness of the responsibility of Church personnel to identify signs of abuse and report concerns. The training also gives tools to personnel to create a safe environment for minors and vulnerable adults.
	Subject of Complaint	A person against whom a safeguarding concern has been raised.
	Vulnerable adult	Any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise to resist the offence.
	Witness	An individual who provides additional inculpatory or exculpatory evidence to a preliminary investigation or risk assessment.

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED SAFEGUARDING COMMISSION ORGANISATIONAL CHART



APPENDIX 3

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN 2023

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND DEFINITIONS

IDENTIFYING SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Physical Signs**: Unexplained bruising or regular weight loss, withdrawal from physical activities.
- Mental & Emotional Signs**: Excessive worry, changes in eating, withdrawal, frequent use of medication.
- Behavioral Signs**: Aggression or hostility, changes in appearance, isolation.

Types of abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Spiritual Abuse
- Neglect
- Unlawful Abuse
- Financial Exploitation
- Medication

Bullying

Bullying encompasses a range of harmful behaviours, from physical aggression to verbal abuse, social exclusion, and cyberbullying.

It thrives on power imbalances and fear, leaving victims feeling helpless and isolated.

The Safeguarding Commission is dedicated to creating a safe haven within our Church. If you have concerns, please reach out.

Grooming

Grooming is a term often associated with manipulative behavior, wherein individuals build a relationship of trust and emotional connection with minors and vulnerable adults for the purpose of exploitation, abuse, or other harmful activities.

The Safeguarding Commission is dedicated to creating a safe haven within our Church. If you have concerns, please reach out.



SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES



Active Listening



- Take the time to listen attentively when they want to share their thoughts or concerns.
- Avoid interrupting and show genuine interest in what they have to say.

Empathy



- Show empathy and understanding towards their experiences and emotions.
- Validate their feelings and let them know it's okay to feel the way they do.



How can you safeguard your children online?

- Set boundaries for online activities and screen time.
- Teach them about online privacy & the dangers of posting personal information.
- Encourage open communication about online experiences.




WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

IT'S OKAY TO

- SEEK HELP
- TAKE A BREAK
- SET BOUNDARIES
- HAVE BAD DAYS
- TAKE SOME TIME OFF
- BE YOU



YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

We are here to support you and assist you.




... **Listen**

Pay attention to what others say; their feelings matter.

👁️ **Observe**

Be mindful of any indications of discomfort or distress.

🧑 **Ask**

When in doubt, ask if someone's okay.

🚨 **Report**

If you have a safeguarding concern, report it promptly.

Our mission

Our aim at the Safeguarding Commission is to guarantee the safety and well being of children and vulnerable adults within the Church. We aim to prevent all forms of abuse and poor practice through increased awareness and proactive measures.

Contact Us

2247 0950

info@safeguarding.mt

safeguarding.mt

