

# Institute of Charity The Rosminians

Audit Report  
May 2026

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## 1. Introduction

**1.1** This report is an audit of the safeguarding arrangements for The Institute of Charity (referred to as the Rosminians hereafter). This audit has been undertaken by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) as a follow up to The Rosminians' previous audit conducted in 2023 during the pilot phase of baseline audits of Religious Life Group (RLGs). The previous audit resulted in an overall rating of Early Progress<sup>1</sup>, and twelve recommendations were made to support improvements in safeguarding practice. Reports from audits conducted during the pilot programme were not published, therefore, this will be the first audit of The Rosminians to be published.

**1.2** The Rosminians have been present in England and Wales since 1835. The first Rosminian religious were missionaries who opened schools, and parishes were subsequently assigned to Rosminian priests, through which ministry they continue to have a presence in Rugby, Leicester, London, Cardiff, Newport, and Loughborough.

**1.3** There are currently thirty-three community members, of whom eighteen are in active ministry in England and Wales, eleven are retired, two are out of ministry due to health reasons, and the remaining two are based overseas (in Rome and New Zealand). Those members involved in active ministry provide parish cover, with the exception of two who hold roles at Ratcliffe College as the President and Deputy President respectively. The Rosminians employ two members of domestic staff at their Rugby site, a cook and a housekeeper. For members with care needs, support is currently provided by providers registered by Care Quality Commission (CQC)<sup>2</sup>. This will therefore not be considered by this audit.

**1.4** There are currently two locations where retired members reside, one in Rugby, and the other in Surrey. Plans are underway to relocate members from Surrey as

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<sup>1</sup> Potential audit ratings can be found in 3.2

<sup>2</sup> The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England.

the property is due to be placed on the market. It is envisaged that members will relocate to Rugby, subject to further consideration being given to their care and support needs.

**1.5** This audit seeks to assess the effectiveness of current safeguarding arrangements, by considering practice over the last 12 months. The scope of this audit covers practice across England and Wales. The CSSA has categorised RLGs on a scale from Level 1 (a small community with minimal outreach and no known safeguarding concerns), Level 2 (a medium sized community with some outreach with vulnerable populations and/or providing some diocesan activities, such as a Parish Priest), to Level 3 (a large community and/or one with significant outreach with vulnerable populations and/or a disproportionately high number of open safeguarding cases). The Rosminians were assigned to a Level 2 audit on the basis of their size and ministry.

**1.6** The CSSA recognises the rich diversity of the Religious and acknowledges that the Religious Life Groups within any category may vary significantly in terms of size, ministry, and safeguarding practice. Consequently, CSSA analysts may use professional judgement to ensure that Religious Life Groups are graded against the national standards in such a way that reflects their uniqueness.

## 2. Methodology

**2.1** The CSSA analyst initially contacted the Provincial Leader on 13 August 2025 to advise of their intention to conduct a safeguarding audit during the week of 24 November 2025. This contact was responded to by the Safeguarding Lead advising the CSSA of a change in leadership and a request was made to change the planned date to a week later. This request was agreed, however, due to unforeseen circumstances, the date was subsequently revised to 24 February 2026, at the instigation of the analyst.

**2.2** The Rosminians were requested to complete a Level 2 audit self-assessment tool providing information on their adherence to the National Safeguarding Standards

and progress in the overall implementation of the standards. The self-assessment was submitted by 3 November 2025 (the date given prior to new arrangements being made) along with supplementary documentation. Additional evidence was provided after this date, with the final submission received on 27 February 2026, three days after the audit.

**2.3** Information from the self-assessment and supporting evidence provided by The Rosminians (recorded in the Appendix) was reviewed by the analyst and was assessed against the Level 2 Maturity Matrix to arrive at ratings for each standard and a combined overall grade.

**2.4** Audit interviews were undertaken in-person on 24 February 2026 at The Rosmini Centre in Leicestershire with:

- The Provincial Leader (who also holds the role of Chair of Trustees).
- The Safeguarding Lead (also a Trustee)
- Six members of the Provincial Council
- Five Rosminian members

**2.5** Liaison has taken place between the analyst and the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS)<sup>3</sup>, and the Dioceses of Nottingham, Birmingham, Cardiff-Menevia, and Arundel and Brighton, regarding their engagement with The Rosminians. A response was received from three of these dioceses.

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<sup>3</sup> The Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) is an independent team of safeguarding professionals offering safeguarding services to the Religious of the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

### 3. Audit grading

**3.1** Practice was assessed against the eight National Safeguarding Standards adopted by the Catholic Church in England and Wales<sup>4</sup> and graded in accordance with the CSSA Maturity Matrix for Level 2 RLGs.

**3.2** Potential audit gradings for each standard, which are combined to produce an overall grading, are: Below Basic, Basic, Early Progress, Firm Progress, Results Being Achieved, Comprehensive Assurance and Exemplary.

| Overall grading                                                                                                | Results Being Achieved |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Standard 1</b> – Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body’s leadership, governance, ministry and culture | Results Being Achieved |
| <b>Standard 2</b> – Communicating the Church’s safeguarding message                                            | Firm Progress          |
| <b>Standard 3</b> – Engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed                           | Results Being Achieved |
| <b>Standard 4</b> – Effective management of allegations and concerns                                           | Results Being Achieved |
| <b>Standard 5</b> – Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)               | Results Being Achieved |
| <b>Standard 6</b> – Robust human resource management                                                           | Results Being Achieved |

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<sup>4</sup> Full details of the eight standards and underpinning sub standards are available here: The Eight National Safeguarding Standards ([www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk))

|                                                           |                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Standard 7 – Training and support for safeguarding        | Results Being Achieved |
| Standard 8 – Quality assurance and continuous improvement | Firm Progress          |

## 4. Audit findings against each standard

### 4.1 Standard 1 Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body's leadership, governance, ministry and culture

#### Strengths

**4.1.1** The Rosminians have produced a Safeguarding Booklet which is made publicly available via the Safeguarding section of their website,<sup>5</sup> where a link prominently placed early on the page takes users directly to the document. The handbook is titled 'Rosminian Safeguarding Policy UK' and states within the first two pages that it is 'for all members and employees'. The document incorporates a Safeguarding Policy and provides detail of its scope and purpose, reporting structures and requirements, a Safer Recruitment policy, and a Whistleblowing Policy. It also includes key contacts within the Rosminians and of external support organisations. A recommendation from the pilot audit was to add a date to the booklet to reflect when it was produced, along with a review period. The current booklet now reflects the date of when the booklet was initially written, a review undertaken in September 2025, and a planned review date of September 2026.

**4.1.2** Since the pilot audit, a new Provost Provincial of the Rosminians of the United Kingdom and New Zealand Province has been elected and began his new ministry on 6 January 2025. During interview, the Provincial (named hereafter as the

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<sup>5</sup> [Rosminians website](#)

Provincial Leader) spoke about how he promotes a culture of safeguarding, explaining that having regular dialogue and being open and available contributes to this. He described the steps taken to create a safe environment, stating that this is achieved by ensuring that members are appropriately supported, have opportunities to raise concerns, and feel confident that any issues raised will be addressed promptly and effectively. The Provincial highlighted the links he maintains with the Safeguarding Lead, which is made easier as they both reside at the same location where they are able to maintain close, regular contact regarding ongoing safeguarding matters.

**4.1.3** Members understand the importance of their roles in creating safe environments for both them and those to whom they minister. Some examples were provided of how this is practically achieved, including ensuring that they are not left alone with children, preventing altar servers from entering the sacristy until an adult who has a DBS<sup>6</sup> check is present, and displaying notices that remind parents/carers about consent, as well as key safeguarding contacts within the parish.

**4.1.4** The Rosminians are a registered charity<sup>7</sup>, of which, there are five Trustees, all of whom are religious members based in the UK. Collectively, along with two other Rosminian members, they also form the Provincial Council. Trustees understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and ensure that it is a standing item on the agenda at every meeting. Meetings take place at least four times a year at the Rosmini Centre in Leicestershire. Minutes provide evidence that Trustees, alongside the two other members have active oversight and make decisions on safeguarding cases and their associated actions, training expectations, the development of the Safeguarding Booklet and its distribution, and the practical arrangements for ensuring members' safety. Minutes demonstrate clear actions, lines of responsibility and associated timescales. Trustees have not had any recent experience (within the scope of this audit) of submitting a Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission, however, any decision as to whether to submit such a

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<sup>6</sup> [Disclosure and Barring Service - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disclosure-and-barring-service)

<sup>7</sup> Institute of Charity, number 222508.

report would be made with the support from RLSS, which the Rosminians have been members of, since its inception. In addition, when submitting the group's financial accounts, Trustees are routinely asked to confirm whether any serious incidents have occurred.

**4.1.5** The Rosminians have appointed a designated Safeguarding Lead who is a member of the Rosminian community and has held this role for the last four years, combining it with providing parish cover within the Diocese of Westminster. At the time of the audit, the analyst was advised of the Safeguarding Lead's decision to step down from the role, and that succession planning had begun to ensure a robust and comprehensive handover to another Rosminian member. This member was selected by the Provincial Leader, based on his background in Psychology.

**4.1.6** The Integrity in Ministry<sup>8</sup> standards have been distributed amongst all members. One member (the former Provincial Leader) has created a document titled 'Comparison of the Maxims of Christian Perfection with the behaviour patterns of Integrity in Ministry'. This document includes quotes from the founder of the Rosminians and relates to the foundations and guiding principles of the group. A workshop was held in October 2025, to examine this document and gather feedback. Attendance was recorded, and feedback from thirteen members who attended has been documented. This includes key messages, strengths of the Province in maintaining the standards, identified weaknesses, strengths within own pastoral practice in relation to the standards, and areas where weaknesses remain. Members spoken to during the audit advised that they had found the document helpful in making safeguarding clearer and less intimidating, particularly for those who have come from different countries where safeguarding practice differs. Members highlighted the value in how the standards links safeguarding with spiritual and pastoral practice, and how this supports them in maintaining safe and respectful ministry.

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<sup>8</sup> Integrity in Ministry is a code of conduct for Religious engaged in ministry in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. It has been written for the guidance of those in ministry and for the information of those people with and among whom Religious exercise their ministry.

**4.1.7** Since the pilot audit, the Rosminians have continued to engage extensively with RLSS, whom they view as their main support for the management of safeguarding cases and training. Information received from RLSS confirms that the Rosminians take on board any advice and guidance provided, which will be discussed further in this report in other standards.

### Areas for development

**4.1.8** While the minutes from Provincial Council meetings demonstrate that action is being taken to address compliance against the national safeguarding standards and record the associated actions, there is no evidence to suggest that the risks associated with Rosminians' ministries have been formally assessed. The Provincial Council should, therefore, create a formal risk register to enable them to document safeguarding and governance risks, alongside the controls and mitigating actions in place to manage them. Once developed, the risk register should act as a live document that is regularly reviewed and updated as risks change, when new risks are identified, and when mitigating actions are completed. This will not only provide assurance to the Provincial Council that safeguarding risks are actively being monitored and managed but will also support the newly appointed Safeguarding Lead to keep track of identified risks, mitigation actions and anything outstanding.

**4.1.9** A recommendation from the pilot audit was to develop a Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan, however, this has not been progressed. There is an acknowledgement of the need to develop such a plan, as documented in the self-assessment, with the intention that this work will be progressed using the findings from this re-audit. A Safeguarding Action Plan should clearly set out the actions required to address the recommendations, including who is responsible for implementing each action, the timescales for completion, and arrangements for the tracking and monitoring of progress. This will help ensure accountability and support continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

### Graded: Results Being Achieved

## 4.2 Standard 2 Communicating the Church's safeguarding message

### Strengths

**4.2.1** As described in 4.1.1, the Rosminians have a public facing website on which the safeguarding section can be found in a prominent position at the top of the home page. The opening statement states *"We Rosminians affirm the One Church Approach<sup>9</sup> to safeguarding children, young people and adults through the promotion of a sustained culture of constant vigilance. The Church recognises the personal dignity and rights of all vulnerable people towards whom it has a special responsibility. The Church and individual members of it undertake to take all appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all and to practice fully and positively Christ's Ministry towards children, young people and adults to respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm."* The page also includes the contact details for the Safeguarding Lead, including an email address and message facility. In addition, it outlines the functions of the CSSA, RLSS, and provides 'Useful links' to external support services including Safe Spaces<sup>10</sup> and the Rosminians' Safeguarding Booklet. There is also a clear message on this page, although not in the most prominent location, advising that anyone with concerns about the welfare of a child or adult at risk should not delay in contacting the police, using 999 if a child or adult is believed to be in immediate danger. There is a 'need help' function available which allows users to request a call back.

**4.2.2** Leaders view the Safeguarding Booklet as one of the main methods of communicating safeguarding information to members. In addition, routine verbal

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<sup>9</sup> [Leaflet-Safeguarding-Structures-A-guide-for-Professionals-February-2020.pdf](#)

<sup>10</sup> Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal, and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church of England, the Catholic Church in England and Wales or the Church in Wales.

reminders are given to reinforce the importance of keeping themselves safe, including guidance on the safe use of social media.

**4.2.3** Members advised the analyst that safeguarding messages are mostly received from the Safeguarding Lead (who is also a Trustee). This demonstrates that messages are being communicated by the Provincial Leadership Team. Members described these communications as effective in ensuring that physical displays meet the expectations of the Safeguarding Lead and dioceses, with each parish maintaining consistency in displaying details of safeguarding personnel. Members further advised that photographic evidence is requested to demonstrate compliance. Evidence provided as part of the audit (photographs of display boards and a sample of newsletters) demonstrate consistent practice in displaying details of the safeguarding representative and Safe Spaces. In one parish, there was clear evidence that a tear-off strip containing contact details for Safe Spaces had been removed, suggesting that these messages are being seen and acted upon. Safeguarding information is also displayed in the Rosmini Centre, which is open to the public, as was the case at the time of the baseline audit.

#### Areas for development

**4.2.4** There is a need to review and update the safeguarding section of the website to ensure that the information is current. The section relating to the 'CSSA function' should be revised to reflect the changes to its functions, eg that it no longer provides advice on case management. In addition, the 'Additional Safeguarding Information' section of the website includes links to several external resources, including Safeguarding in the Catholic Church<sup>11</sup>, Hurt by Abuse leaflet<sup>12</sup>, the Archbishop of Birmingham speaking out against Domestic Violence<sup>13</sup>, and a leaflet produced by the former National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC) titled 'Where allegations have been made against a person in a position of trust.' As the organisation who produced the leaflets is no longer in existence, this section of the

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<sup>11</sup> [Safeguarding in the Catholic Church](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Hurt by Abuse](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Speaking out against domestic violence](#)

website should be reviewed and updated to ensure that all links and resources are current, accurate and relevant.

**4.2.5** While there is evidence of consistent communication amongst members and parishioners at parish level, this is somewhat limited and does not demonstrate any consideration being given to communicating with a range of audiences such as children, or individuals with additional needs. There is also no evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of the current messages, beyond that of a tear-off slip being taken. A recommendation from the pilot audit was to develop a Communication Plan, however, this is yet to be implemented. A Communication Plan should be developed and could be incorporated into either the Safeguarding Booklet or the Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan. The plan should seek to ensure that safeguarding messages are reaching the intended audiences and that their impact can be evidenced. In developing the plan, consideration should be given to seeking the views of volunteers, children, young people, parents/carers, adults at risk, to assist with establishing the most effective methods of communication for them. This will help ensure that safeguarding messages are accessible, relevant and understood by all audiences. For example, it would be useful to establish whether messages regarding parental consent are being viewed by parents, what evidence exists to demonstrate this, and what improvements could be made to communicate these messages more effectively. This could include exploring other methods beyond physical displays, such as the appropriate use of social media platforms. While discussions have reportedly taken place by the Provincial Leader around the safe use of social media, safeguards should be agreed to ensure that if any social media platforms are to be used, they are done so safely and appropriately for all. There is evidence of some members having completed Social Media Awareness training, therefore, messages from this course should be reflected upon and used to inform this aspect of safeguarding communications.

**Graded: Firm Progress**

## 4.3 Standard 3 Engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed

### Strengths

**4.3.1** The Safeguarding Policy is included in the Safeguarding Booklet and is applicable to Rosminian members and employees. The Rosminian Board of Trustees is recorded as having a duty to maintain appropriate governance and oversight of safeguarding in accordance with the policy and national guidelines. It further states that certain functions are delegated to the Provincial and the Safeguarding Lead and that these include direct oversight of the Policy, the management and oversight of documentation, case progression/management and the secure storage of safeguarding reports and related material as well as oversight of the relationship with and input in the work of the RLSS. Furthermore, it states that the Safeguarding Lead may delegate some of this responsibility to RLSS by referring the case to them, but will remain as the key contact, unless another individual is identified to assume responsibility. It also covers the reporting procedures, that in the event of a child, young person, or an adult being in immediate danger, it must be reported to the police immediately.

**4.3.2** The Rosminians have experience of responding to allegations of non-recent harm and of engaging with survivors. At the time of the audit, evidence was seen of communication between the Rosminians, RLSS, and the family member of a survivor of non-recent abuse. This resulted in an apology being issued and financial compensation being paid. In email correspondence seen, the Safeguarding Lead described how unexpected the allegation was and acknowledged the grief and regret caused to those harmed. In a separate case involving non-recent abuse, a survivor made contact for the second time as they felt ready to re-engage. No documentary evidence of this contact was provided, however, RLSS confirmed that the Rosminians had taken appropriate action when the matter was first reported (outside the scope of the audit) and had cooperated well with further contact, during which an apology was issued by the Provincial Leader. This demonstrates a

caring and compassionate response to survivors, including an acknowledgement of harm caused, and respectful engagement.

**4.3.3** Training certificates reviewed as part of the audit demonstrate that a range of training has been undertaken by members. Examples include Safeguarding in Spiritual Accompaniment, Listening to Victims and Survivors Perspectives, Professionals Protect<sup>14</sup>, Communicating and Supporting those with Dementia, Domestic Abuse Awareness, Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults. During discussions held with Rosminian members, they commented on how useful and relevant the training has been for them in carrying out their respective roles. One member described how impactful the training was, noting that it provided clarity about where to see advice and support from when concerns arise. An example was shared of a situation in which significant safeguarding concerns were identified, which led to contact being made with the diocesan safeguarding team and a subsequent referral to Children's Services.

**4.3.4** The Provincial Leader advised that he maintains an open approach with members, recognising his responsibility to care for each individual and aiming to respond promptly to any concerns without delay. In respect of working with individuals who come forward to report harm, he stated that Rosminians are ready to engage and provide whatever support is required, whether therapeutic or otherwise. He added that guidance and support will be sought from RLSS and the diocese, to determine the most appropriate approach. At the same time, consideration would also be given to the pastoral support that members may require following the receipt of a disclosure.

#### Areas for development

**4.3.5** While there is evidence that members of the Provincial Council have oversight of safeguarding cases and engage with those who report harm, there is limited evidence that responses are routinely reflected upon to establish whether a caring

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<sup>14</sup> Professionals Protect is a course run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation aimed at improving understanding of child sexual abuse including the warning signs, exploring the factors that increase risk to families.

and compassionate response has been provided. A recommendation from the pilot audit was to develop processes for the learning from allegations and from the experiences of those who report harm. This should be progressed through a quality assurance process to enable leaders to systematically review responses, identify areas for development and ensure practice is informed by the experiences of those who come forward to report harm. This could be achieved through the introduction of anonymous surveys, in-person meetings, or other means preferred by the individual. Any learning identified should be shared with members and used to inform safeguarding practice.

Graded: Results Being Achieved

## 4.4 Standard 4 Effective management of allegations and concerns

### Strengths

**4.4.1** The Rosminians' Safeguarding Booklet sets out the Safeguarding Policy including its scope and purpose. Within the 'Purpose of the Rosminian Booklet' section, it states that *'the aim is to provide a clear set of actions for adults to follow when someone brings to their attention, or they themselves observe, concerns about a child or an adult'* It further states that *'national procedures are in place to ensure a consistent, timely and person-centred response by all adults within the church and all its settings. These policies express the determination within the Rosminian family and the Catholic Church, to take all reasonable steps to ensure that children and adults can participate in the life of the church safely and can be supported and protected where they may be at risk in other settings such as their own homes, at school or in an institutional setting.'* The policy also sets out the procedures to follow in the event of any allegations being made against individuals with roles within the Church, including members of the religious community, lay persons and volunteers, and those who do not hold a role within the church. Members present in the focus group were aware of the procedures to follow in the

event of receiving lower-level concerns and understood the distinction between responding to these and more serious situations that would require contact with emergency services, although most had no experience of this in practice.

**4.4.2** Within the scope of the audit, there have been four cases involving the Rosminians, all overseen by RLSS, and closed at the time of the audit. Two of these cases related to non-recent abuse and one involved members subject to safeguarding plans. The final referral was assessed not to meet the threshold for safeguarding, however advice was provided on the appropriate action to be taken, which included seeking further training and giving consideration to the development of guidance for similar circumstances. Evidence of the responses provided by both the Safeguarding Lead and the Provincial Leader demonstrated a willingness to engage with and respond appropriately to these concerns.

**4.4.3** Records of safeguarding concerns and allegations are maintained and stored securely by the Safeguarding Lead and are accessible only to him and the Provincial Leader. This aligns with the Safeguarding Policy, which states that the Safeguarding Lead is responsible for the secure storage of safeguarding reports and associated documentation. Towards the bottom of the home page of the Rosminians' website, there is a Privacy Policy<sup>15</sup> section that outlines the types of personal information retained, including special categories of personal data. It explains how and why data is processed, and the lawful basis for processing this information, which includes safeguarding purposes. The policy also provides contact details for anyone who requires further information about how their personal information is protected, to offer feedback or make a complaint. In addition, the details of the Information Commissioner's Office is provided should there be any situations where there are any unresolved complaints.

**4.4.4** Evidence was seen in the minutes of Provincial Council oversight of these cases, including records of who was involved (internally and externally) and any further actions required and by whom. This demonstrates that safeguarding cases

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<sup>15</sup> [Privacy Policy](#)

are subject to appropriate oversight from Council members and that actions and responsibilities are clearly recorded.

#### Areas for development

**4.4.5** To strengthen practice in this standard, members of the Provincial Council should introduce a standing agenda item at future meetings to consider any learning that arises from safeguarding allegations and concerns, irrespective of how they are referred and by whom. This will help promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement, support the identification of any emerging themes or risks (which should be included in the risk register once created), and used to inform policies, procedures and any training needs amongst members.

#### Graded: Results Being Achieved

### 4.5 Standard 5 Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)

#### Strengths

**4.5.1** The Rosminians have long standing experience of managing and supporting members who have been the subjects of allegations and concerns (outside of the UK). There are two Care and Safety Management Plans (CSMP) in place that continue to be managed by the Safeguarding Lead and RLSS. The review period for CSMPs is at least annually and/or following any potential change in circumstances. The analyst saw evidence of a revised plan being developed to reflect planned changes of residence and personnel involved in its monitoring and support. While this review occurred outside the annual review period it rightly reflects the need for early communication with the diocese in which the new residence is located to ensure transparency and to support decision making regarding the appropriateness of the move.

**4.5.2** Evidence was also seen of communication from RLSS to the Safeguarding Lead and Provincial Leader pertaining to a lack of prior communication when all provincial members attended a meeting at a conference centre, including members subject to CSMPs. While no safeguarding incidents occurred, the matter prompted reflection by the Provincial Leader, who confirmed that improved communication and additional safeguarding measures would be in place, should the venue be used in the future. This matter was also relayed to Trustees, who were advised of the action that should have been taken and that the matter had been resolved. In addition, evidence was seen within minutes demonstrating that Trustees had oversight of individual cases involving the two members subject to CSMPs and the ensuing actions. The extent of this oversight, as documented, is somewhat limited as minutes do not reflect any broader consideration given to the implementation of the CSMPs, adherence to them, or the support arrangements in place.

**4.5.3** While the Rosminians have experience in the management and support of members who are the subjects of allegations and concerns, in the event of receiving any new allegations, the Provincial Leader described that his approach would be to ensure that the individual was spoken to, in the presence of a safeguarding representative and that his views would be gathered as to what he would like to happen, unless a removal from ministry was necessary. In such situations, accommodation, financial, and spiritual support would all be provided, as well as any anything else identified as being necessary. If any canonical advice was required, it would be sought from a diocese or from Rome.

**4.5.4** Members present within the focus group expressed confidence that they would be supported if an allegation were to be made against them. They understood that they may be removed from ministry during the process and would receive support and guidance from the Safeguarding Lead and Provincial Leader. There were concerns raised about the potential impact of a long-term removal from ministry, particularly in situations where the individual reporting harm subsequently withdraws the allegation.

### Areas for development

**4.5.5** Within the 'Accountability' section of the CSMP, the Provincial Leader is documented as the person responsible for the oversight of the plan and RLSS is responsible for its implementation. The review period for CSMPs is set at least annually, and while it is acknowledged that they were reviewed in readiness for a change in circumstances, this was outside the expected review period. CSMPs should be reviewed in line with the prescribed timescales, to ensure continued adherence and to seek assurances that the support identified continues to meet the needs of the individual. The revised CSMP retained by the Safeguarding Lead and made available to the analyst demonstrates that signatures are obtained from the majority of personnel involved, however, not all parties had signed the document. While evidence was seen of copies of the revised plan being circulated by the Provincial Leader to other Rosminian members, signatures should be obtained from all involved parties to confirm that everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities within the plan.

**4.5.6** It is positive that members are confident that they would be supported in the event of an allegation being made against them, however, their understanding appears to be that such support would be provided by the Provincial Leadership Team. To support transparency, members would benefit from having a clearer understanding, in the form of written guidance, as to who would be involved in the process and at what stage. This should include the role of the Provincial Leadership Team, RLSS, statutory authorities and any other relevant organisations.

### Graded: Results Being Achieved

## 4.6 Standard 6 Robust human resource management

### Strengths

**4.6.1** The Rosminians safer recruitment processes are included in the Safer Recruitment Policy section of the Safeguarding Booklet. The opening statement

state that *'As part of its commitment to ensuring that children, young people and adults are kept safe from harm, the Catholic Church in England and Wales will apply robust selection and appointment processes to anybody who is applying to work or minister within the Church in a role which gives them direct access to children or adults at risk who may be otherwise vulnerable.'*

**4.6.2** At the time of the pilot audit, the Safeguarding Lead had identified that some vetting checks were overdue and that steps were required to address these outstanding checks. This resulted in the recommendation that completion dates for vetting checks be confirmed with the dioceses responsible for processing members' DBS applications and that more comprehensive records be maintained. The issue around compliance has since been resolved, as all members engaged in active ministry now hold an up-to-date DBS certificate, either issued by the diocese or RLSS via UCheck<sup>16</sup>. However, there is scope for further improvement of the recording system, as currently copies of DBS certificates are stored in separate electronic folders for each Rosminians location, rather than a single central record. Rectifying this would enable both the current and future Safeguarding Lead to easily identify and monitor renewal dates, which will, in turn ensure that DBS checks are routinely updated in a timely manner.

**4.6.3** The Rosminians have not had any previous experience of responding to a blemished DBS check. In the event of receiving one, any decision to appoint to a role would be based on the nature of the adverse information disclosed. As outlined in the 'Disputes relating to information disclosed on the DBS disclosure' section of the Safer Recruitment Policy, *'the decision in relation to religious members rests with the Provincial who is responsible for the appointment'* and the *'decision to appoint volunteers generally rests with the parish priest who will take advice.'* These two statements distinguish where responsibilities lies, however, it would be less ambiguous to explicitly state where that advice would be sought from.

**4.6.4** The procedure for receiving existing Rosminian members (from overseas) starts with an email conversation between the Provincial Leader and his

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<sup>16</sup> UCheck is the software system used by RLSS to process DBS checks.

counterpart in other Rosminians provinces. Discussions take place regarding the type of ministry the individual would be involved in, and the most appropriate member is identified based on their suitability, background and experience. Once this has been agreed, the receiving Bishop is contacted with the details of the new member and a copy of their Testimonial of Suitability<sup>17</sup> is provided to the Vicar General and the diocesan safeguarding office. Evidence was seen of the Testimonials of Suitability for Rosminians members demonstrating that this process is routinely followed. In addition to the Testimonial of Suitability, the member will be subject to an international police check. If satisfactory they will then be subject to a DBS check after six months of being in the country. They will also undertake safeguarding training with RLSS and Missio<sup>18</sup> training as part of their inculturation training, which the newest Rosminians member is due to commence in October 2026. The procedure for novices involves an assessment of their suitability, including input from a psychologist, as well as an introduction to safeguarding and the Code of Conduct. This outlines in its opening statement, *'we will respect the dignity and background of each individual person by recognising God's image in them and making them aware about safeguarding'*. It further provides details the ways in which this commitment will be lived out.

**4.6.5** The 'Whistleblowing Policy and safeguarding matters' section of the Safeguarding Booklet outlines the Rosminians' commitment to encouraging and enabling anyone with a serious concern to raise them without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The section includes a policy statement, the aims and scope of the policy, the types of concerns that can be raised and who concerns should be raised with. A recommendation from the pilot audit was for the procedures for raising concerns regarding the Provincial Leader to be included. This has been actioned and the relevant contact details have been included within the booklet. It is noted, however, that although the booklet has been developed for members and employees, some sections appear to apply to a wider

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<sup>17</sup> A Testimonial of Suitability is written confirmation from a Religious Superior that the individual is of good standing with no known safeguarding concerns.

<sup>18</sup> Missio is a national charity that has collaborated with the Catholic Missionary Union to provide training to pastoral ministers from overseas who are working in England and Wales.

audience. For example, the Whistleblowing section states that *‘general concerns should always be raised with the person to whom the person is making the complaint is accountable, in the first instance, the parish priest, safeguarding representative or the Rosminian superior or the provincial.’* It further states that *‘if you are not sure who to contact, either due to not knowing who fills the above-named roles, or to the seriousness or sensitivity of the issue, or the identity of the individual who is suspected of malpractice, you should seek advice from the RLSS.’* Details of these roles are included elsewhere in the booklet, therefore, this section could be refined to include a reference as, ‘see page [number].’

#### Areas for development

**4.6.6** Although the Safeguarding Booklet includes a section on raising concerns, it does not explicitly set out the procedures for raising complaints about safeguarding services provided. In addition, the guidance appears to apply specifically to members and employees, which may make it less accessible to those who may wish to raise a complaint beyond those groups. A separate standalone Complaints Policy should be developed that clearly sets out the steps for raising a complaint, the escalation process, including details of RLSS and CSSA as the final stages of recourse. Once developed, the policy should be made publicly available via the Rosminians’ website, to promote a culture of openness and transparency. Any complaints received should be reviewed and any learning identified should be used to inform further practice.

#### Graded: Results Being Achieved

### 4.7 Standard 7 Training and support for safeguarding

#### Strengths

**4.7.1** Safeguarding training provided by RLSS is routinely promoted amongst members and evidence was seen that members are availing themselves of a range of training appropriate to their roles. Examples include the current

Safeguarding Lead undertaking bespoke training for safeguarding leads and the house superiors based at the two retirement homes having completed 'Caring with Confidence: Communicating with Those with Dementia' training. As with DBS checks, training records are maintained by the Safeguarding Lead and are organised according to the location of members, as described in 4.6.2. The Provincial Council reported, (with evidence seen in meeting minutes), that there are ongoing challenges where members who attend diocesan training do not always receive certificates confirming completion.

**4.7.2** Evidence was seen in Provincial Council meeting minutes of leadership oversight of training, including the actions required, by whom, communication to members about training expectations and the identification of three individuals required to complete specific training relevant to their roles. Provincial Council members advised that the expectations regarding the completion of training are clear amongst members, and that any failures to attend training will be addressed by the Provincial Leader. This may result in the member being removed ministry, although this has not been necessary to date.

**4.7.3** Members consistently reported that they feel suitably supported to meet the safeguarding expectations placed upon them and are confident in knowing who to contact should they require safeguarding advice and support.

### Areas for Development

**4.7.4** RLSS training is promoted amongst members, and they are given autonomy to identify courses that would be beneficial to their ministry. Evidence demonstrates that all members involved in active ministry have undertaken some safeguarding related training, however, there is currently no set expectation of what specific training they should complete, only that basic safeguarding must be completed prior to 'any higher level' training. A recommendation from the pilot audit was for the Rosminians to review the training needs of all members in active ministry. This remains an outstanding action. A training needs analysis should be developed to assist with identifying the training needs of members, as appropriate to their roles and areas of ministry. The newly appointed Safeguarding Lead should avail himself to bespoke designated safeguarding leads training, in order to effectively prepare

him for the role. In addition, as not all Trustees have received safeguarding training for this role, this should be undertaken so that they are appropriately equipped to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

**4.7.5** At present, there are no formal mechanisms in place for seeking feedback on training and measuring its effectiveness, which the Provincial Leader acknowledges. Opportunities should be provided (eg during provincial gatherings of members) for members to critically reflect on their experiences of training. This would enable good practice to be shared more widely, allow others to learn from experiences and help identify any further support that may be required to develop and/or strengthen safeguarding practice. Any training needs identified during the process should be fed into the training needs analysis, once developed.

Graded: Results Being Achieved

## 4.8 Standard 8 Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

### Strengths

**4.8.1** Since the completion of the Rosminians' pilot audit, there is evidence of progress, with seven out of twelve recommendations now fully implemented, resulting in an improved grade being achieved. Evidence provided by the Safeguarding Lead and RLSS, demonstrates continued and proactive liaison regarding training, safeguarding cases, safeguarding plans and requests for feedback on the Safeguarding Booklet. This demonstrates their ongoing commitment to improving safeguarding practice.

**4.8.2** The Integrity in Ministry standards have been shared amongst all members, along with a complementary document, 'Comparisons Maxims' that draws on extracts from the founder and guiding principles. These documents have provided members with clear messages on how the pastoral standards relate to safeguarding and the maintenance of safe, healthy and respectful boundaries. This

work is important in ensuring that members are well-prepared, informed, and equipped to fulfil the expectations of their ministry with confidence.

#### Areas for Development

**4.8.3** While progress has been acknowledged in this re-audit, some recommendations remain outstanding. For example, the development of a Safeguarding Implementation/ Action Plan, which the self-assessment notes the intention to use the recommendations from this audit to inform the plan. Once developed, the plan should clearly outline the actions required against each of the eight safeguarding standards, identify who will be responsible for each action and include the associated timescales. It should be subject to routine review by the Trustees in order to monitor progress. Other outstanding recommendations from the baseline audit include the development of a Communication Plan and establishing mechanisms to learn from the handling of safeguarding cases. In addition, the training needs of all members should now be formally established through a training needs analysis and routine opportunities should be provided for members to reflect on training, share good practice and discuss learning from their experiences. By addressing these areas, this will further strengthen safeguarding practice and support continuous improvement.

**4.8.4** The Rosminians have experience of responding to both recent and non-recent safeguarding allegations and concerns, with support and involvement from RLSS. It is evident that the Provincial Leader is committed to supporting survivors and to ensure that they are suitably and appropriately supported. To further strengthen practice in this area, they should now seek to develop processes to ensure that allegations and concerns are routinely analysed, in order to draw learning from practice. This should include seeking feedback from those who have engaged with the Rosminians, to establish whether their needs have been met and to identify any potential improvements in policy, procedure, and practice.

#### Graded: Firm Progress

## 5. Summary of overall findings

**5.1** There is clear evidence of progress being made across the eight National Safeguarding Standards, with strengthened leadership oversight, improved documentation and continued engagement with RLSS. Safeguarding is now a visible and routine element of governance, although further work is required to develop a formal risk register and an accompanying Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan to support monitoring of progress and accountability.

**5.2** Communications regarding safeguarding are generally effective and consistent, particularly at parish level, where information is displayed appropriately and is monitored. The safeguarding section of the website, however, requires updating to ensure accuracy and the absence of a Communication Plan means that there is limited assurance that safeguarding messages are being appropriately tailored to, and understood by, different audiences.

**5.3** The Rosminians demonstrate a compassionate and appropriate response to those who report harm, drawing on RLSS guidance and demonstrate a willingness to engage with survivors. While practice in this area is sound, there remains limited evidence of systematic learning from cases or feedback from those who have come forward, which would strengthen continuous improvement.

**5.4** Safer recruitment and training arrangements have continued to improve, with full DBS compliance seen for members involved in active ministry and a broad uptake of relevant safeguarding training. Further development is required in establishing a Training Needs Analysis and implementing mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of training and identify ongoing learning needs across the Province.

**5.5** A commitment to continuous improvement is evident, with members engaging positively with safeguarding expectations and Integrity in Ministry standards. However, several recommendations from the pilot audit remain outstanding. The development of clear quality assurance processes, including a publicly accessible Complaints Policy and routine review of learning from safeguarding practice, will be essential in sustaining and further strengthening safeguarding arrangements.

## 6. Recommendations

To support improvement, the following recommendations are made:

### Within 6 months

- To develop and approve a formal safeguarding risk register that identifies key risks, mitigating actions, responsible individuals, and the review frequency.
- To agree a Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan that sets out actions required, the associated timescales, and monitoring arrangements.
- To update the safeguarding section of the website to ensure that all information, external links, and references reflect current structures, services and national guidance.
- To ensure that all Care and Safety Management Plans are fully signed by all involved parties, confirming understanding and agreement with roles and responsibilities.
- To develop a Communication Plan outlining how safeguarding messages will be communicated to different audiences. This could form part of the Safeguarding Implementation/ Action Plan or Safeguarding Policy.
- To introduce a process for learning from allegations and survivor engagement, including anonymous feedback mechanisms, opportunities for reflective practice, and case reviews. The Provincial Council should regularly review learning and use it to inform safeguarding practice.
- To create a single central recording system to support oversight of DBS and training renewals and compliance.
- To develop a Complaints Policy that is accessible to all who may need it and publish it on the Rosminians' website. This could be a standalone document or part of the Safeguarding Policy.
- To undertake a Training Needs Analysis covering all members in active ministry, Trustees, and in leadership roles.

#### **Within 12 months**

- To gather and evaluate feedback (eg from members and parishioners) to assess the effectiveness and reach of safeguarding communications.
- To develop written guidance for members clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Provincial Leadership, RLSS, diocese and statutory authorities, in the event of an allegation being made against them.

The first four recommendations would ordinarily have been set with a 3 month timeframe. This has been extended to reflect changes in key personnel and to allow for a thorough handover of safeguarding arrangements, including the implementation of these recommendations.

## **7. Arrangements for follow-up**

**7.1** In line with the audit pathway, having received an overall rating of Results Being Achieved, the minimum period for The Rosminians' next safeguarding audit will be two years, subject to there being no indications of increased risk.

## **8. Appendix**

### **Evidence provided**

Code of Conduct

Comparisons Maxims Attendance List and Feedback from Members

Comparisons Maxims Document

Copies of Care and Safety Management Plans

Copies of Newsletters

Correspondence with RLSS

Correspondence with Father General regarding Novitiate Procedures

Members' DBS Certificates  
Members' Testimonials of Suitability  
Members' Training Certificates  
Minutes from Provincial Council Meetings  
Photographic Evidence of Noticeboards  
Province List  
Safeguarding Booklet