

The Christian Brothers (also known as Edmund Rice England)

Baseline Audit Report
September 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 This report is a baseline audit of the safeguarding arrangements for The English Province of the Congregation of Christian Brothers. It is undertaken as part of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency's programme of baseline audits for Religious Life Groups in England and Wales.

1.2 The Congregation of Christian Brothers is an international Roman Catholic religious congregation founded in Waterford, Ireland in 1802 by Blessed Edmund Rice. The Christian Brothers in England form part of the Christian Brothers European Province, which was established in 2007 and brought together the previous English Province and two Irish Provinces. The European Province states that the Congregation's main mission focus is education, inspired by the original vision of Blessed Edmund Rice.¹

1.3 Eight members, all of whom are over 70 years of age, are based in the north of England and continue to provide limited public ministry including through Salford Edmund Rice Volunteers (SERV) and Edmund Rice Youth Camps. The former supports refugees and asylum seekers with digital inclusion, such as passports and asylum claims. While the latter is managed by a small staff team, with the assistance of volunteers. There are currently four youth camps that are held within school premises. Camps are one week in length and occur at the beginning of summer in the school holidays.

1.4 The Edmund Rice Network England website identifies that there are nine Edmund Rice schools in England, however, the legal and financial responsibilities of these institutions are managed by a separate trust.

1.5 Both the international congregation and the province have been subject to significant and sustained public scrutiny in relation to non-recent child abuse and

¹ Information taken from the Edmund Rice England website: <https://www.edmundriceengland.org/>

safeguarding failures. During the course of this audit a criminal case has concluded in Scotland. A number of civil claims remain outstanding in England.

1.6 This audit seeks to assess the effectiveness of current safeguarding arrangements by considering practice over the last twelve months. The scope of this audit covers practice within England only. 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 to vulnerable populations and/or provision of some diocesan activities, such as a parish priest), to Level 3 (a large community and/or one with significant outreach to vulnerable populations and/or a disproportionately high number of open safeguarding cases). The Christian Brothers were assigned to a Level 2 audit.²

1.7 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 Safeguarding Lead on 1 December 2025 to advise of their intention to conduct a safeguarding audit during the week of 16 March 2026. However, the Christian Brothers requested a short delay to ensure preparedness for the audit, and an agreed audit date was arranged for 13 April 2026.

2.2 The Christian Brothers were requested to complete a Level 2 audit self-assessment tool providing information on their adherence to the eight National Safeguarding Standards and progress in the overall implementation of the standards. The self-assessment was returned on 30 March 2026, with supporting

² <https://catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/resources/quality-assurance-framework-for-religious-life-groups/>

evidence, as listed in the Appendix to this report. Additional evidence was provided after this date, with the final submission received on 22 June 2026.

2.3 Information from the self-assessment and supporting evidence provided by the Christian Brothers was reviewed by the CSSA analyst and assessed against the Level 2 Maturity Matrix to arrive at ratings for each standard and a combined overall grade.

2.4 The following audit interviews were undertaken between 13 April and 6 May:

- Province Leader
- The safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead
- Five member meetings
- SERV volunteers
- English safeguarding lead member
- Trustees focus group
- Network facilitator
- Health nurse

2.5 In order to capture a wide variety of views and opinions from members and those working within the Christian Brothers, online survey links were sent to 11 members and 21 employees. 10 completed surveys have been completed.

2.6 A public call for information was issued by the CSSA and published on both the CSSA website and the Christian Brothers' own website, Edmund Rice England. Information about the public survey was also shared with survivors of abuse engaged with the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS). Although a standing invitation for individuals to come forward is permanently available via the CSSA website, it was considered appropriate to issue a specific call for information in this audit, given the widely recognised extent and seriousness of abuse associated with the Christian Brothers. One response to the public survey was received.

2.7 The analyst has observed SERV practice and premises.

2.8 The analyst reviewed the Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Christian Brothers European Province report published by The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) September 2013.³

2.9 Liaison has taken place between the analyst and the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS)⁴, the Archdiocese of Liverpool and Diocese of Salford, regarding their engagement with The Christian Brothers, which has been minimal.

3. Audit grading

3.1 Practice was assessed against the eight national safeguarding standards adopted by the Catholic Church in England and Wales⁵ and graded in accordance with the CSSA Maturity Matrix for Level 2 RLGs.

3.2 Potential audit ratings against each standard, and the final overall ratings, are: Below Basic, Basic, Early Progress, Firm Progress, Results Being Achieved, Comprehensive Assurance and Exemplary.

Overall grading	Firm Progress
Standard 1 – Safeguarding is embedded in the Church body’s leadership, governance, ministry and culture	Firm Progress

³ NBSCCCI is a company established by the bishops and religious of Ireland to provide advice, services and assistance in the furtherance of the development of the safeguarding of children, and to monitor and report on compliance with legislation, policy and best practice. The Christian Brothers’ audit report can be accessed here: [Christian Brothers.pdf](#)

⁴ The RLSS is a team of independent safeguarding professionals offering safeguarding services to the Religious of the Catholic Church in England and Wales [Religious Life Safeguarding Service – Religious Safeguarding](#)

⁵ Full details of the eight standards and underpinning sub standards are available here: The Eight National Safeguarding Standards (www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk)

Standard 2 – Communicating the Church’s safeguarding message	Firm Progress
Standard 3 – Engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed	Firm Progress
Standard 4 – Effective management of allegations and concerns	Firm Progress
Standard 5 – Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)	Firm Progress
Standard 6 – Robust human resource management	Firm Progress
Standard 7 – Training and support for safeguarding	Firm Progress
Standard 8 – Quality assurance and continuous Improvement	Early Progress

3.3 The key findings of this audit are that the Christian Brothers in England have made clear and credible progress in strengthening safeguarding arrangements, particularly through the development of policies, communications materials, safeguarding roles and links with external safeguarding bodies. There is evidence of increasing leadership attention to safeguarding, a willingness to engage with external scrutiny, and a stated commitment to acknowledging past harm and improving future practice. This provides a stronger foundation on which to build, but the audit also identifies that safeguarding arrangements in England remain at a relatively early stage of maturity in a number of key operational areas.

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 Christian Brothers European Province has a designated safeguarding lead who is based in Dublin, Ireland, and supports all members throughout the province. The safeguarding lead is a retired police officer and trained psychotherapist who has been in post since 2024. The safeguarding lead has attended a range of training with the NBSCCCI. There is also a newly appointed deputy safeguarding lead who is also based in Ireland and a newly appointed safeguarding coordinator for England, who is also a trained psychotherapist and member of the Christian Brothers in England and has previously held leadership roles within the congregation. The current Province Leader, acknowledging the extent of harm caused by the congregation and in an effort to be better equipped to meet with survivors of abuse, also trained as a psychotherapist in 2023.

4.1.2 The Province Leader previously held the position from 2002 and was reappointed in 2022. The Province Leader is nominated by members; nominations are usually accepted by the congregational leaders in Rome who then formally appoint to the role. The Province Leader is appointed for a term of six years and can serve two terms.

4.1.3 The Christian Brothers have been consistently developing safeguarding policies since the 1990s. The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure Document has been in place since at least 2013 and it has been subject to regular updates, most recently in 2025. In February 2026 the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure Document (for Brothers resident in England) was developed. The policy includes a foreword re the

development of the RLSS and the CSSA and references Vos Estis Lux Mundi.⁶ The policy also includes a message from the Province Leader which offers apologies to those who have been hurt by abuse, and it encourages survivors to contact the Christian Brothers.

4.1.4 The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure document highlights that “the Christian Brothers are committed to safeguarding all children and young people and adults at risk”. The policy is applicable to Christian Brothers based in England and also applies to staff, employees and volunteers working on behalf of the Christian Brothers. There is a glossary of definitions to support understanding, which includes guidance on the age of consent and identifying vulnerable adults. The policy includes guidance on reporting concerns and how to support and care for complainants (the term used to describe a person who has made an allegation of abuse). The policy also offers guidance on the recording and storing of information and data protection. It is highlighted within the policy that there are several associated policies. The policy includes details of survivor services. A date to review the policy is detailed within the document as 26 February 2027.

4.1.5 In addition to the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure document, there are a number of other policies and procedures that support the work of the congregation in England, particularly within SERV and the Youth Camps. Youth Camps have developed the Risk Management Procedures that are aligned to health and safety protocols as well as sections for safeguarding. The Youth Camps have also developed templates for reporting concerns termed as “incident report sheets” and have established agreements with host schools that any safeguarding concerns will be managed by the head teacher or a designated teacher, who will remain on call for the duration of a camp, this includes any referrals to statutory agencies.

⁶ Vos Estis Lux Mundi (2019/ updated 2023) is an apostolic letter issued *motu proprio* establishing universal procedures for reporting abuse, preventing cover-ups, and holding clergy accountable [Apostolic Letter in the form of “Motu Proprio” of the Supreme Pontiff Francis “Vos estis lux mundi” \(7 May 2019\)](#)

4.1.6 Members have also spoken about ensuring the practical application of safeguarding for example there is no dedicated space within SERV premises for private discussions and so supports a culture of openness and ensures both members, volunteers and those accessing the services remain visible at all times. Similarly, within the community residence doors are left open should anyone visit the property and when locking up the property at SERV two members will be present.

4.1.7 The Christian Brothers have a suite of safeguarding policies that are available online at the Edmund Rice England webpages. This includes the complaints policy, low-level concerns policy, whistleblowing policy and the CSSA guidance flowchart for responding to allegations of abuse or concerns about children and adults at risk. The Youth Camps also have a system named PADLET⁷ which holds information for schools, and camp coordinators with dedicated sections for safeguarding and training.

4.1.8 Safeguarding practice is overseen by the board of Trustees which is comprised of members of the congregation who are based throughout the province, including in England. The board of Trustees meets at least four times a year, with at least one meeting being held in person. It is reported by the Trustees and reflected in the minutes of the meeting, that safeguarding is always on the agenda. The board of Trustees is also supported by a safeguarding committee. The safeguarding committee is based in Ireland and meets four times a year. The committee is made up of a lay safeguarding chair, the Province Leader, members of the congregation and members of other religious congregations.

4.1.9 The Christian Brothers have signed contracts with the CSSA and RLSS, and the RLSS have confirmed that safeguarding advice has been provided to the Christian Brothers in relation to the implementation of a safeguarding plan. The RLSS are also

⁷ Padlet is a visual collaboration tool that works like a digital bulletin board, canvas, or whiteboard. It allows individuals or groups to post, organize, and share text, images, videos, and documents on a single collaborative webpage.

engaged with a number of survivors linked to non-recent abuse perpetrated by members of the Christian Brothers or employees linked to the congregation.

4.1.10 The Christian Brothers are striving to change the culture of safeguarding within the congregation and have demonstrated prior to, and in preparation for this audit, a commitment to improving safeguarding practice, having developed new safeguarding policies and roles to support the members within England.

Areas for development

4.1.11 The Christian Brothers have been the subject of significant and sustained public scrutiny in relation to non-recent child abuse and safeguarding failures. Over several decades, allegations and findings concerning physical, sexual and emotional abuse by members of the congregation have emerged through criminal investigations, civil litigation, statutory inquiries, redress processes and media reporting. Whilst a number of these allegations have related to abuse in England and Scotland, the scale and seriousness of abuse associated with the congregation in Ireland⁸ has meant that safeguarding responses, survivor engagement and institutional reform have been heavily focused within the Irish context, as have inquiries and redress arrangements. Evidence gathered during this audit indicates that, whilst safeguarding developments within Ireland have significantly shaped the congregation's overall safeguarding approach, there is now an increasing recognition of the need to examine more fully the distinct safeguarding responsibilities associated with the congregation's ministries and activities in England.

4.1.12 The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure document is not well understood amongst members in England and volunteers within SERV and will therefore need to be more effectively disseminated, embedded and supported through structured training, clearer guidance and routine

⁸ The Ryan Report 2009 available at [The Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse \(The Ryan Report\)](#)

safeguarding discussion to ensure that all relevant persons understand both the policy requirements and their individual safeguarding responsibilities in practice.

4.1.13 Similarly, it is essential that further training is offered to SERV members and volunteers in respect of basic safeguarding principles including managing boundaries, reporting procedures and recording and storing information, to ensure this practice aligns with safeguarding policies in operation within the congregation.

4.1.14 Whilst the Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures used by SERV was last reviewed in 2026, a further review is required to ensure that it is linked to the correct services being provided as there are repeated references to the those provided by another organisation.

4.1.15 The newly appointed safeguarding coordinator in England, who currently undertakes a co-ordination function, does not yet have a formalised role description. Similarly, there are other roles without job descriptions or responsibilities, such as the health care nurse. Job descriptions should be developed for all roles to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities, authority, reporting arrangements and accountability are clearly articulated and consistently understood across the congregation.

4.1.16 It is evidenced within the minutes of Trustee and safeguarding committee meetings that safeguarding, particularly with regard to allegations and concerns is discussed, however there is no evidence that suggests Trustees are overseeing the safeguarding practices of Youth Camps or SERV. Safeguarding practice could be strengthened across the European Province by ensuring that there is a suite of key performance indicators that is reviewed by the safeguarding committee and Trustees. This should include the work of SERV and the Edmund Rice Youth Camps, safer recruitment, training for volunteers, training for members and complaints.

4.1.17 Whilst the Christian Brothers are familiar with the core principles underpinning “Integrity in Ministry,” the document itself is not widely known or routinely referenced amongst members of the Christian Brothers in England. Members in England would benefit from the document being shared and embedded within the congregation to ensure that members understand its purpose, expectations and relevance to professional boundaries, conduct and safeguarding culture.

Graded: Firm Progress

4.2 Standard 2 Communicating the Church's safeguarding message

Strengths

4.2.1 The Christian Brothers have recently developed a European Communications Document for England, which highlights the intended audiences as both internal, (Brothers resident in England) and external, which includes volunteers, dioceses and partner agencies. The purpose and objectives of the document are defined and clearly align with supporting members with their knowledge of safeguarding and ensuring that appropriate apologies are made to survivors and that mistakes and failures are accepted where appropriate. A number of key messages are identified, which include that “safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility” and “victim-survivors come first”. The methods to be utilised in communications are considered and it is clearly recorded that the messages are owned by the Province leadership team, Trustees, and safeguarding leads. It is highlighted that feedback on safeguarding messages will be sought via surveys and focus groups. The communications plan also includes details of how it will be reviewed and the planned review date.

4.2.2 The Christian Brothers have two public websites for the European Province, Edmund Rice England, and Christian Brother.eu, both of which have a prominent ‘safeguarding’ section accessible through a hyperlink from the home page. The safeguarding pages then lead with a message from the Christian Brothers Province Leader in which he states that “I want to express my deepest apologies to the persons that have been abused, hurt or personally damaged by any member of the Christian Brothers, European Province. We have always endeavoured to respond and personally meet each individual wishing to contact us to report an incident of abuse. That commitment still holds. The awareness of what happened to children and vulnerable adults has also brought shame and deep

disappointment on the Christian Brothers Congregation. What occurred should never have happened. Should you wish to make contact or renew a contact with us, we will be more than willing to meet with you. In this Policy document you will find guidance and information on many ways to contact us directly. We are committed to the safety of all children and vulnerable adults and to assuring them of the respect and dignity that is their due. For many years we have been working with Church and Civil authorities, not only to ensure safety for current generations but to make amends. Furthermore, we have in place systems and procedures to help eliminate any dangers to children and vulnerable adults in the future. We hope that greater systems of accountability and collaboration will ensure safe environments for all people who work within our Church ministries.”⁹

4.2.3 The safeguarding pages on the website also include the safeguarding policy for Brothers in England and associated safeguarding policies, and during the audit the public call out for information to support the CSSA audit was displayed. The contact details for the safeguarding team are also displayed on the website, which include the safeguarding and deputy safeguarding lead, the safeguarding coordinator for England and the contact details for the CSSA. Telephone numbers, email addresses and postal addresses are all displayed. On the safeguarding pages there is also a statement of child protection, which states “We will liaise closely and openly with statutory agencies to ensure that any concerns or allegations of abuse that are raised are promptly reported and properly responded to, victims supported and perpetrators held to account.”

4.2.4 Safeguarding materials for Edmund Rice Youth Camps, aimed at schools and camp coordinators are available via PADLET, which is a shared online platform, and has a designated safeguarding section. Available within PADLET is a link to the online Level 3 Safeguarding training for volunteers in the Catholic Church via the CSSA, links to complete Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)¹⁰ checks, links to the Christian

⁹ [Safeguarding – Christian Brothers – European Province](#)

¹⁰ The Disclosure and Barring Service processes and issues criminal record checks on individuals applying for employment or a voluntary role for employers.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Brothers European Province safeguarding webpages, the safeguarding and risk management document for all camps in England, the safeguarding posters that are to be displayed in camps, risk assessment forms and do's and don'ts guidance for camp leaders, which amongst other statements advises camp leaders "do tell the mentor of any concerns you have, and do not be on your own with a participant". PADLET also includes information directed at parents and guardians of participating children, highlighting that "All volunteers receive full training in Child Protection and Health and Safety, as well as guidance on running all activities and sessions throughout the week. On Camp we have a one-to-one ratio of leaders to kids which ensures each child receives full supervision at all times".

4.25 Safeguarding materials have been observed on display in SERV and align with the communications document that "safeguarding is everyone's responsibility". Messages have been translated into multiple languages so that they can be understood by the adults that access the services. The CSSA poster with details of the parish safeguarding representative is also displayed within SERV and also includes the contact details for the Christian Brothers member who leads the project, it is reported that the CSSA poster is also displayed within member residences. Also displayed within SERV is the Volunteers Safeguarding Agreement and there are posters for other services, such as health services and a display that provides guidance in respect of the monetary value of coins and notes in England.

Areas for development

4.26 The Christian Brothers clearly understand the significance of effective safeguarding communications and have given considerable thought to communications having developed a range of appropriate communications materials, together with a communications plan. However, it would appear that some of the communication materials have been developed within the various ministries with minimal oversight of the leadership team. In addition, the communications plan is at an early stage of implementation, with limited awareness of it across the congregation and volunteers and staff in England, and so the plan will need to be embedded more deeply into practice.

4.2.7 The communications plan does not yet sufficiently address the distinct needs and experiences of those who access SERV and Youth Camps. Safeguarding messages would be strengthened by being tailored for these groups, including through the use of different languages, more child-friendly content, and clearer reference to the specific risks faced by vulnerable groups and young people. Seeking feedback on the effectiveness of these messages would further strengthen practice across the European Province. The Christian Brothers may also wish to consider making website content available in different languages.

4.2.8 The Christian Brothers have had extensive contact with survivors either directly or via solicitors or the RLSS. However, there is limited evidence that survivors have contributed to shaping safeguarding messages. Engaging survivors in the development of messaging will help ensure communications are accessible, meaningful, trauma-informed, and responsive to the needs and experiences of those they are intended to support.

4.2.9 Furthermore, while contact details for survivor services are included within the safeguarding policy, there are opportunities to make these more visible and accessible through webpages and other public-facing communications. Making routes for support and engagement easier to identify could further strengthen accessibility and survivor engagement.

Graded: Firm Progress

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

Strengths

4.3.1 There have been 17 safeguarding complaints against the Christian Brothers in England within the last 12 months, however the Christian Brothers do not have direct contact with any of the survivors. The safeguarding complaints are all linked to non-recent abuse. Emails from the safeguarding team to solicitors representing

survivors have been observed to clearly state that the safeguarding team has no role in any litigation processes.

4.3.2 The Christian Brothers have a designated lay safeguarding lead and lay deputy safeguarding lead for the European Province, and a safeguarding coordinator who is a member of the Christian Brothers. The safeguarding lead has advised that he is happy to travel to England to meet with survivors and is a trained psychotherapist. The safeguarding lead has completed safeguarding training with the NBSCCCI titled Sexual Abuse—understanding the dynamics and effective responses, in addition to safeguarding lead training with the RLSS, which was also attended by the deputy safeguarding lead.

4.3.3 The Christian Brothers in Ireland report to be engaging with an abuse survivor and film director who has produced a film about abuse perpetrated by members of the Christian Brothers¹¹. Members of the Christian Brothers have been encouraged to view the film as part of ongoing reflection and engagement with the congregation's history. Members who contributed to this audit described feelings of hurt, shame, stigma, and a sense that aspects of their lives and vocations had been undermined by the actions of those who abused. Recognition of these impacts does not diminish the experiences of survivors, nor does it negate concerns regarding the organisational culture that allowed abuse to occur and persist. Rather, it highlights the wider impact of abuse within the congregation and the consequences when cultures, leadership, and systems fail to prevent, identify, and respond effectively to abuse.

4.3.4 The Christian Brothers England's Safeguarding Policy applies to all members based in England, and is inclusive of "staff, employees and volunteers employed and/or working with the Christian Brothers". The policy details the roles and responsibilities of the Province Leader, safeguarding committee, safeguarding lead and all other roles. In the "all other roles" section it is highlighted that "all Christian Brothers, staff, employees and volunteers working with the Congregation have an obligation to ensure they are familiar with the content of the Provinces

¹¹ [IFI@Home | The Days of Trees](#)

Safeguarding Policy and know the reporting procedures and any other associated policies and procedures”. There is also a general section, which highlights that “everyone involved in the Congregations work has a responsibility to report to the safeguarding lead, deputy lead or safeguarding co-ordinator any safeguarding suspicions, concerns or allegations they have observed or that have been brought to their attention”.

4.3.5 The safeguarding policy highlights the national policy on mandatory reporting from the CSSA, and the reporting procedures are outlined, including what actions should be taken and who information should be shared with. It is recorded within the safeguarding policy that the safeguarding lead will be responsible for managing casework in liaison with the RLSS.

4.3.6 The safeguarding policy sets out care and support for complainants, in which it is advised that “complainants need to be listened to and heard, to ensure that any allegation or disclosure of abuse is handled compassionately, effectively, and professionally” and there is a section entitled how support will be offered which includes but is not limited to, the offer of a face-to-face meeting between the safeguarding or deputy safeguarding lead and the complainant, a support person to be identified and an invitation to meet with the Province Leader or another representative of the Christian Brothers if they wish, “in an effort to hear and acknowledge the experiences of the complainant.” It is also highlighted that further information is available from the RLSS who can support people to make allegations and/or complaints or access to support/counselling services.

4.3.7 The safeguarding coordinator for England is also a trained psychotherapist, and although he has not been in professional practice for some time, he notes transferable skills that are a benefit when meeting with survivors. Similarly, the Province Leader is a trained psychotherapist who is also a member of the Board for Towards Healing, an organisation providing professional support for people who have experienced institutional, clerical, or religious abuse in Ireland. The Province Leader has shared his understanding of the devastating impact that abuse has on survivors and their families and friends, and that he is happy to meet with survivors. Within Ireland the Christian Brothers are developing a healing centre, the healing

centre will be accessible to survivors across the European Province. It is the current practice of the Christian Brothers to financially support survivors to access counselling.

Areas for development

4.3.8 The public call for information received one response from a survivor, who whilst offering praise in respect of the support they received from the RLSS, raised significant concerns regarding the Christian Brothers. The survivor described the Christian Brothers as largely absent and focused on litigation, with limited evidence of meaningful survivor engagement. The abuse and responses described related to matters largely outside of the current audit period, however, the survivor's reflections are included to support learning. These reflections highlight the importance of maintaining survivor-focused engagement throughout disclosure, safeguarding, and litigation processes, ensuring that survivors experience communication, support, and decision-making processes as compassionate, transparent, and trauma-informed.

4.3.9 The Province Leader has identified ongoing legal proceedings and the potential implications of litigation as factors that can complicate direct engagement with survivors. In response the congregation in Ireland now issues a letter offering pastoral support through the complainant's solicitor. Similar practices will also be implemented in England should an allegation be received, and the letter is currently being formulated with the support of the RLSS. The safeguarding team operates independently of litigation processes and is therefore well placed to provide a channel for ongoing engagement and support.

4.3.10 Whilst there are a number of survivors who have suffered harm perpetrated by the Christian Brothers, there remains limited direct engagement between survivors in England and the congregation, with many individuals choosing to engage primarily through the RLSS or legal representatives. The Christian Brothers should continue to ensure that messages of support remain available to survivors and seek opportunities, where appropriate, to obtain feedback regarding their experiences of engaging with the congregation, including where this is facilitated through third parties. Such feedback would assist the congregation in

strengthening survivor-focused practice and informing future safeguarding developments. To support this work, the Christian Brothers should develop a survivor engagement framework that provides opportunities for survivors to contribute to safeguarding developments, share feedback on their experiences of engagement with the congregation, and help shape future safeguarding priorities in a manner that is voluntary and trauma-informed.

Graded: Firm Progress

4.4 Standard 4 Effective management of allegations and concerns

Strengths

4.4.1 The Christian Brothers have extensive experience of responding to allegations and concerns all of which have been linked to non-recent abusive behaviour. The safeguarding and deputy safeguarding lead evidenced that they are consistently compliant with referring all abuse allegations to the RLSS and the police via Operation Hydrant¹² in England. During interviews and focus groups, members, employees and volunteers all demonstrated an awareness that any safeguarding concerns must be escalated within the congregation.

4.4.2 The Province Leader has advised that he expects to be notified immediately if there are any safeguarding concerns or allegations, and the safeguarding lead has advised that discussions are consistently held with the leadership team to ensure that they are aware of concerns and updated appropriately. Minutes of the Trustees and committee meetings evidence that allegations and concerns are discussed in these forums.

¹² Operation Hydrant is a UK policing initiative coordinating investigations into non-recent child sexual abuse, particularly involving public figures or institutional settings. [The Hydrant Programme](#)

4.4.3 The safeguarding team uses paper files to record concerns and has developed a safeguarding document where key information is stored including a reference number for the case, the name and address of the respondent and current status, name and address and contact details of the survivor if known, what the nature of the concerns are and the location of where the harm took place and there is also a section to record whether counselling has been offered. Key dates are recorded such as date reported to the Christian Brothers, and date the Christian Brothers alerted the RLSS.

4.4.4 The Christian Brothers have recently developed a low-level concerns policy for Brothers resident in England. The low-level concerns policy highlights that the policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Christian Brothers' safeguarding policy and code of conduct. The low-level concerns policy is applicable to Trustees, members, employees and volunteers and it states that its purpose is to empower individuals to report safeguarding and low-level concerns. A definition of low-level concerns is included which are stated to be "concerns around an adult's behaviour towards a child or an adult which are not consistent with the standards and values of the Christian Brothers (England) no matter how small. These concerns do not meet the threshold for safeguarding intervention". There is then guidance on how to report concerns including self-reporting, and guidance on the procedures which will be implemented by the Christian Brothers safeguarding lead including potential outcomes. There is information in regard to when other agencies may be consulted and a date to review the policy is detailed as February 2027.

4.4.5 The Christian Brothers have ensured that all policies governing their safeguarding practice are available on the websites for the congregation, evidencing transparency regarding how safeguarding concerns and low-level concerns will be managed within the congregation.

Areas for development

4.4.6 Whilst the safeguarding team capture all concerns via the safeguarding front document and are retaining email exchanges, additional recording documents to manage concerns would be beneficial. The safeguarding team should record chronologies with key dates and running case records which capture details of

contact with the respondent or supporting agencies. These records would allow for analysis and informed decision making to be evidenced such as dates discussed at the safeguarding committee or board of Trustees meetings.

4.4.7 Children and asylum seekers are recognised as particularly vulnerable groups within the safeguarding and health context. The ministries of SERV and Edmund Rice Youth Camps work directly with these groups; however, no safeguarding concerns have been raised within the last 12 months, and where concerns were identified outside the scope of this audit, they have not been effectively recorded so that actions taken can be reviewed. Given the nature of the groups supported by SERV and Edmund Rice Youth Camps, further reflection is needed to ensure that safeguarding systems, reporting pathways, and levels of awareness are operating effectively.

4.4.8 Interviews evidenced confusion amongst members and volunteers about who to raise a safeguarding concern with, which appears to be linked to the safeguarding lead being somewhat new in post and the development of the role of the safeguarding coordinator in England. Clear reporting pathways need to be revisited with all members, employees and volunteers in England so that all concerns and allegations are managed effectively. SERV would also benefit from a template which includes prompts should members or volunteers observe any concerns or are informed of any concerns. This should include who needs to be notified of the concerns and their contact details.

4.4.9 The low-level concerns policy is a newly developed document and has not yet been fully embedded within the Christian Brothers in England. The policy will need to be reflected upon with members, employees and volunteers and consideration should be given to scenario-based training that would support understanding of what is a low-level concern. Although the review date is listed as February 2027, the policy also states that it will be reviewed every three years at Trustee Board meetings. The Christian Brothers should clarify which review schedule it intends to adopt.

4.4.10 The Edmund Rice Youth Camps have advised that there is a working agreement with host schools for camps which stipulates that a teacher must be on

call at all times for any safeguarding concerns as they will hold all information in relation to the child/pupil. It is reported that the teacher will assume responsibility for ensuring safeguarding concerns are referred to the correct services if required. The analyst has not observed a copy of this agreement, and it is unclear how this will be effective for children who attend a camp from a different school.

Graded: Firm Progress

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

Strengths

4.5.1 The Christian Brothers have extensive experience in managing and supporting respondents who are subjects of allegations and concerns, and case records identify that the safeguarding team is proactive in contacting the RLSS and sharing information appropriately. The safeguarding lead has completed training in managing a safety plan, and in addition to annual reviews aims to meet with those subject to a safety plan on a three-monthly basis. A general overview of concerns, safeguarding actions, and management arrangements could be identified through case file documentation and associated email correspondence.

4.5.2 The safeguarding plan reviewed was generally clear and structured, with proportionate and well-defined restrictions that demonstrated a clear safeguarding intent. The plan also evidenced consideration of contingency arrangements and reflected an awareness of the need to balance safeguarding responsibilities alongside the respondent's rights and wellbeing. A support person had been identified within the safeguarding arrangements, and there was evidence that practical support had been offered to the respondent. Additional support, including counselling provision, had also been offered, indicating recognition of the respondent's pastoral and emotional wellbeing needs.

4.5.3 There was evidence within the safeguarding documentation that the Province Leader was aware of the safeguarding concerns and had signed the safeguarding plan, demonstrating leadership oversight and engagement in the management of the respondent. Trustees had also received updates regarding the respondent's circumstances, indicating an appropriate level of governance awareness and oversight.

4.5.4 The case file further evidenced direct communication with the respondent, including advice and guidance relating to visits and safeguarding expectations. The respondent had signed the safeguarding plan, demonstrating some involvement in, and awareness of, the safeguarding arrangements, expectations, and restrictions in place. Whilst not proportionate in the case observed for this audit, the Christian Brothers have shared that they have used psychological assessments to support their understanding of risk in respect of members who are thought to have caused harm.

4.5.5 During interviews and focus group, members demonstrated an understanding of the procedures that would be followed if they were to become the subject of an allegation, for example, voluntary removal from ministry and being offered support from the leadership team. Members spoken to as part of this audit shared that they felt well supported by the members they lived with, and by the leadership team in Ireland and they spoke positively about the support offered to them by the recently appointed health nurse.

4.5.6 The Christian Brothers employ a nurse for the province based in Ireland, who previously travelled to England to support the members. However, more recently, a nurse has been employed for England. The role provides valued healthcare support to all members particularly elderly and potentially vulnerable members, through regular contact, health monitoring, practical advice, and emotional reassurance. The health nurse reportedly brings significant professional nursing experience, and shared she has a caring and responsive approach to supporting individuals with their health and health needs.

4.5.7 The Christian Brothers are an ageing community, and whilst every effort is made to support members to remain in their preferred place of residence, the

Christian Brothers do own a care facility in Ireland that is managed by another organisation, and there are a number of preferred care homes that are available to members should they require care that cannot be facilitated within the community.

4.5.8 The Province Leader has shared that the Christian Brothers have also developed a protocol within Ireland to consider issues of bullying within religious life and there are a number of indicators that are used to identify bullying behaviour. The Dignity and Respect Document includes a message from the Province Leader which sets out the aim of the policy and clearly identifies it as being intended for community use, definitions of bullying and harassment are provided, with some examples of bullying behaviour, and a complaint procedure outlining how concerns will be managed. It is highlighted that the involvement of An Garda Síochána¹³ will be considered in matters where criminal behaviour may have taken place.

Areas for development

4.5.9 Whilst a safeguarding plan was in place, no formal risk assessment had been completed, and the safeguarding plan did not consistently demonstrate a clear linkage between the allegations, risks, and the objectives of the safeguarding measures implemented. There was limited evidence of the safeguarding plan being formally reviewed and updated to reflect changing circumstances, ongoing risk assessment, or developments within the case. In addition, the case file did not clearly evidence how compliance with the safeguarding plan was monitored, reviewed, or escalated where required, and there was no recorded evidence of the three-monthly safeguarding review meetings or catch-ups offered by the safeguarding lead. To strengthen practice in this area monitoring arrangements, accountability, and ongoing oversight and support need to be evidenced in case recordings.

¹³ An Garda Síochána is the national police and security service of Ireland, responsible for law enforcement, crime prevention, and community policing.

4.5.10 The respondent's views, wishes, understanding, and engagement with safeguarding arrangements were not consistently or clearly recorded within the case file. There was also limited evidence demonstrating how the respondent's wider spiritual, emotional, mental health, physical wellbeing, and pastoral needs had been explored, considered, and reviewed over time. Although support has been offered, there was insufficient recording regarding the nature of support provided, whether it was accepted or declined, and how refusals or disengagement would be managed.

4.5.11 Whilst members demonstrated some understanding with regard to how they would be supported if they were they were the subject of an allegation, to further support members' understanding of the procedures to be followed in the event of them becoming the subject of an allegation, the safeguarding lead should share the CSSA's "Guide for Clergy and Religious, if you are the subject of an allegation of abuse" (or a suitable equivalent). This leaflet provides detail around the management of allegations process, outcomes of statutory enquiries and investigations, internal church processes, record keeping and information sharing, and provision of support.

4.5.12 The health nurse role is clearly beneficial to the members; further consideration could be given to what support can be offered by the health nurse to respondents who are subject to safety management plans. Clear guidance will be required regarding what information can appropriately be shared with the health nurse by the safeguarding and leadership teams, in order to support effective risk management, maintain professional boundaries, and ensure compliance with confidentiality and safeguarding requirements.

4.5.13 Whilst the Christian Brothers have worked with the relevant authorities in Ireland to identify members against whom allegations of abuse have been made and have ensured that those who present a safeguarding risk are no longer engaged in public ministry, there is a disconnect between the congregation's stated commitment to accountability and its practice regarding members convicted of abuse offences. Despite convictions for serious abuse and the availability of canonical processes for dispensation from vows, this process has not

been used. While these are matters of canon law and determined on an individual basis, the absence of any such action raises questions about whether the congregation's disciplinary response sufficiently reflects the seriousness of abuse and its stated commitment to accountability. The Province Leader has acknowledged the need to review whether the current approach appropriately reflects the expectations of survivors, and the standards of conduct expected of its members.

4.5.14 The Dignity and Respect document should be updated to include members within England, ensuring that correct agencies are referenced, for example the police.

Graded: Firm Progress

4.6 Standard 6 Robust human resource management

Strengths

4.6.1 The Christian Brothers have developed a safer recruitment policy for the European Province, which is a policy applicable to all members, employees and volunteers. The safeguarding coordinator within England has also completed safer recruitment training with the RLSS. The safer recruitment policy outlines a strong safeguarding intent across all aspects of the recruitment process, from role advertising, application processes, interviews, pre-appointment checks, induction and probation periods. It is highlighted within the safer recruitment policy that any concerns about an employee or volunteer should be reported to their line manager and/or the safeguarding lead, and that the RLSS should also be contacted for advice and guidance regarding low-level or safeguarding concerns. It is the Christian Brothers policy that DBS checks will be completed every three years.

4.6.2 The Christian Brothers have a small presence within England and will not accept any new members; all members engaged in ministry have an up-to-date DBS certificate. The Christian Brothers also employ a small number of employees

with domestic duties who are not in DBS eligible roles. DBS applications for volunteers that complete the work at SERV have been completed through Salford Diocese. A code of conduct is in place for all SERV employees, and a printed copy is displayed in the SERV premises.

4.6.3 The Edmund Rice Youth Camp Coordinators are also subject to DBS checks; there are four camps in total and there can be a varied number of trainee camp coordinators. DBS checks are completed in respect of camp coordinators by the network facilitator via the RLSS and a copy is requested. The Network Facilitator advises that she reviews all DBS checks to ensure that there are no blemishes or concerns and if there was a blemish the recruitment process would cease. The youth camp leaders are under 18 years old and are therefore not subject to DBS checks, however the recruitment of camp leaders is completed in line with checks from their schools re suitability, and they are asked to agree to a camp leaders' code of conduct which provides suitable safeguarding guidance. It is reported that a child safeguarding poster is displayed within the camp leaders' area as a quick reminder regarding safeguarding expectations, and camp leaders and coordinators are provided with a do's and don'ts pocket-sized card that sets out some basic safeguarding guidance. Practical safeguarding measures are also taken during the duration of the camps such as requiring mobile phones to be stored away.

4.6.4 The Christian Brothers have a complaints policy that has been made publicly available on the Edmund Rice England Network website. The complaints policy demonstrates a clear commitment to resolving complaints quickly, and promoting dignity, respect, and continuous improvement, framing complaints as an opportunity to learn and enhance practice. It is accessible and inclusive, allowing complaints from individuals, groups, organisations, and representatives acting on behalf of others, including where there may be barriers such as fear or language. The policy provides a broad and easy-to-understand definition of a complaint, alongside a structured three-stage process (investigation, appeal, and consideration of external review), with defined timescales for acknowledgement and response. It includes appropriate provisions on confidentiality, data protection, and links to safeguarding procedures, ensuring that safeguarding concerns are

handled through the correct channels. Governance arrangements are in place, with oversight by the Province Leadership Team and Trustee Board.

4.6.5 The whistleblowing policy demonstrates a strong commitment to openness, accountability, and ethical practice, clearly encouraging staff, volunteers, and trustees to raise concerns where they reasonably believe wrongdoing has occurred or may occur. It provides a clear definition of whistleblowing and distinguishes it appropriately from complaints and grievances, which supports correct use of reporting routes. The policy outlines a wide range of reportable concerns, including criminal activity, safeguarding risks, and regulatory breaches, and explicitly references compliance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act, offering reassurance that whistleblowers are protected from retaliation. There are clear procedural steps for raising concerns, including the option to escalate beyond line management to Trustees or external bodies, and the policy commits to confidentiality, ongoing communication, and fair investigation. It also provides reassurance of protection from victimisation and highlights access to independent advice (e.g. Protect)¹⁴.

Areas for development

4.6.6 Whilst the safer recruitment policy framework is robust, there is limited evidence that it has been implemented consistently and effectively and there is some discrepancy regarding volunteer and employee numbers within England. While Youth Camps have some impact upon employee and volunteer figures throughout the year, the Christian Brothers need to undertake a review and reconciliation of workforce and volunteer records to establish a reliable and current position. The Christian Brothers may wish to adopt the RLSS DBS tracker document.

4.6.7 Recruitment processes also require significant strengthening in practice to ensure alignment with the expectations of the policy. This includes ensuring that all roles have an up-to-date job description, recruitment interviews are conducted effectively and consistently, and appropriate references and DBS checks are

¹⁴ Protect is a UK whistleblowing charity [Protect | Speak Up. Stop Harm](https://www.protect.org.uk/)

obtained, reviewed and evidenced prior to recruitment. Consideration should also be given to formalising the induction process for volunteers at SERV.

4.6.8 There is no single, unified approach to the completion of DBS checks for members, employees and volunteers. Whilst DBS checks are being undertaken through a range of linked organisations and arrangements, there is limited central oversight and assurance regarding completion, status and renewal. Strengthened governance and record keeping are therefore required to ensure the organisation maintains clear visibility of DBS compliance and can provide assurance that safeguarding requirements are being consistently met. It is acknowledged by the Christian Brothers that strengthening and centralising oversight of safer recruitment practice will enable more effective monitoring, improved compliance, and continuous improvement.

4.6.9 Trustees need to maintain effective oversight of safer recruitment. This should include receiving regular reporting on compliance, scrutinising information, and providing appropriate challenge where gaps or inconsistencies are identified. Trustee oversight should provide clear visibility of whether recruitment practice is operating in line with policy expectations and support timely action where weaknesses emerge.

4.6.10 While the complaints policy is procedurally clear, it relies heavily on internal handling of complaints, with limited provision for independent oversight, which may give rise to perceived or actual conflicts of interest, particularly at senior levels. There is limited detail on investigation methodology, evidential standards, and consistency of practice, which may affect the robustness of outcomes. The policy could be improved by outlining support mechanisms for complainants, such as signposting to advocacy or pastoral support. The complaints policy should also include the CSSA as a final port of call for complainants who are dissatisfied with how their complaint has been managed.

4.6.11 The whistleblowing policy could also be strengthened by enhancing provisions relating to independence, clarity and support mechanisms, including greater transparency regarding investigation processes, indicative timeframes and

decision-making. In addition, whilst the policy states that whistleblowers will be fully supported, it does not explicitly set out the nature or scope of that support.

Graded: Firm Progress

4.7 Standard 7 Training and support for safeguarding

Strengths

4.7.1 The Christian Brothers acknowledge the importance of training within the safeguarding policy where the minimum standards for training requirements for members, employees and volunteers are outlined. The training expectations for those in public ministry are detailed as being advanced safeguarding training, while the safeguarding and deputy safeguarding leads are expected to complete safeguarding lead training. For all other roles, completion basic safeguarding training is the expectation. It is also highlighted within the policy that the “RLSS recommend that each person involved in ministry complete training in Safeguarding at least once every 12 months. Persons can select different training programmes to widen their Training Portfolio.”

4.7.2 The safeguarding lead has completed training for safeguarding leads with the RLSS, in addition to a range of training and workshops focused on survivor engagement. The safeguarding lead has also completed a train-the-trainer course with the NBSCCCI and provided safeguarding training for members and volunteers in England in February and March 2026. The deputy safeguarding lead has also completed training for safeguarding leads, and a number of members have completed training in respect of their roles as school governors. All those who completed the survey for the Christian Brothers commented that they had completed safeguarding training and had found this helpful, with an average score rating of 8.5 out of 10.

4.7.3 Safeguarding training for the Youth Camps is provided by the network facilitator, who is currently completing a safeguarding in education qualification.

The Youth Camp coordinators complete one in-person training and two online training courses prior to camp, and camp leaders are all required to complete level 3 training for volunteering within the Catholic Church, in addition to two full days training in person, which is inclusive of scenario-based training.

4.7.4 SERV benefits from the support of lay professional volunteers who bring with them invaluable experiences of working within other organisations which also require safeguarding training, such as medical professionals with the National Health Service, including a nurse and general practitioner, and a volunteer who is a Hate Crime Ambassador.

Areas for development

4.7.5 The Christian Brothers have clearly considered the importance of training having addressed this within the safeguarding policy, and they report to be in the process of developing a training plan, which should be operational by September 2026. The RLSS training course list has recently been shared across the congregation and so courses can be identified.

4.7.6 Whilst currently up to date, there has been no consistent training provided to those working within SERV. Consideration needs to be given to the specific training that would benefit those working at SERV and this should be aligned to the diverse needs of its service users and include issues such as good practice in the handling of personal information and effectively managing boundaries.

4.7.7 To support trustee oversight and assurance, the Christian Brothers should expand the training requirements identified within the safeguarding policy and implement a training needs analysis and training compliance tracker that records required safeguarding training by role, monitors completion and renewal dates, identifies gaps in provision, and enables regular reporting to trustees on compliance and effectiveness. The training needs analysis should include members, employees, and volunteers, both within SERV and Youth Camps.

Graded: Firm Progress

4.8 Standard 8 Quality assurance and continuous improvement

Strengths

4.8.1 The Christian Brothers are developing a healing centre for survivors that will be accessible to all survivors within the province.

4.8.2 Youth Camp evaluation days provide a means of learning from experience, with a recent example being the need to provide additional training for camp leaders with respect to children with special educational needs and disabilities.

4.8.3 The Christian Brothers have signed contracts with both the RLSS and the CSSA and have demonstrated throughout this audit that advice and guidance is appropriately sought from safeguarding professionals when required.

Areas for development

4.8.4 Once ready the availability of the healing centre and the services it provides should be advertised on the Congregation's websites, allowing for any survivors who come forward to have an understanding of the services available.

4.8.5 It is acknowledged that the Network Facilitator has only recently become responsible for the oversight of youth camps and as such is evaluating practices to identify areas for improvement in regard to the safeguarding arrangements. Whilst youth camp evaluations are undertaken, safeguarding is not currently a specific agenda item, and the records do not consistently provide sufficient detail regarding behavioural incidents or safeguarding-related concerns. In addition, there is evidence that relevant information regarding the needs of some children and young people is not always being shared by participating schools. The organisation should strengthen evaluation, recording, and information-sharing processes to ensure safeguarding matters are routinely reviewed, risks are fully understood, and appropriate support arrangements are in place.

4.8.6 The Christian Brothers have reported that they are currently developing an implementation plan for the European Province. To support this work, a comprehensive safeguarding strategy, together with a detailed implementation

plan, should be formally developed and approved. The strategy and implementation plan for the European Province will need to incorporate the eight National Safeguarding Standards for England and Wales, in addition to the three core safeguarding standards outlined in the Safeguarding Children: Policy and Standards framework published by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland.¹⁵

4.8.7 The implementation strategy and plan should address the improvement actions identified through this audit and clearly set out the congregation's safeguarding priorities, specific actions, responsible individuals, timescales for delivery, and measurable indicators of success. The safeguarding strategy and implementation plan will provide assurance regarding progress, strengthen accountability, and promote a culture of continuous improvement across the Province. The implementation plan should be subject to regular review and oversight by the Trustees to ensure that safeguarding objectives are being achieved and that emerging risks and priorities are appropriately addressed.

4.8.8 Trustees should also receive a comprehensive annual safeguarding report that provides assurance regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, progress against the implementation plan, compliance with safeguarding standards and statutory requirements, emerging risks, safeguarding activity, and learning arising from audits, allegations and safeguarding practice. This will enable Trustees to provide effective scrutiny, ensuring that safeguarding remains a standing governance priority and that continuous improvement is evidenced across the Province.

Graded: Early Progress

¹⁵ [1. A Safe and Welcoming Church. Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Chur.pdf](#)

5. Summary of overall findings.

5.1 The audit identifies clear and credible progress in the development of safeguarding arrangements for the Christian Brothers in England. Standards one to seven were assessed as Firm Progress, reflecting evidence of strengthening leadership attention, clearer safeguarding governance, improved safeguarding communications, more developed policies and procedures, and a constructive willingness to engage with external safeguarding bodies. The audit found positive intent and a developing safeguarding culture, supported by recent investment in safeguarding roles, training, policy development and engagement with the CSSA and RLSS.

5.2 At the same time, the audit found that safeguarding arrangements are not yet consistently embedded, evidenced or quality assured across all areas of ministry in England. Key areas requiring further development include clearer reporting pathways, stronger case recording and chronologies, more systematic oversight of safeguarding plans and respondent management, improved survivor engagement, stronger workforce and DBS monitoring, and more consistent safeguarding training and support for members, employees and volunteers. Within SERV and Edmund Rice Youth Camps, safeguarding practice would benefit from clearer operational guidance, tailored training, stronger recording arrangements and routine Trustee oversight.

5.3 Standard 8 was assessed as Early Progress, reflecting that quality assurance and continuous improvement arrangements are still at an early stage of development. The Christian Brothers have made meaningful progress and have developed a stronger foundation for safeguarding, but now need to translate policy intent into consistent, measurable and routinely reviewed practice. The recommendations in this report are intended to support the Christian Brothers to embed safeguarding more fully across their ministries, strengthen governance and assurance, and ensure that the experiences and voices of survivors inform future safeguarding development.

6. Recommendations

To support improvement, the following recommendations are made:

Within 3 months

- Develop and approve a formal role description for the Safeguarding Coordinator in England.
- Complete a workforce and volunteer reconciliation exercise.
- Clarify and communicate safeguarding reporting pathways to all members, employees and volunteers.
- Review and amend the SERV Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy to remove references to other organisations and ensure organisational accuracy.
- Introduce safeguarding concern recording templates, case notes and chronologies.
- Obtain and review formal safeguarding agreements with host schools for Edmund Rice Youth Camps.
- Promote and embed the Low-Level Concerns Policy across England.
- Share and embed the CSSA "Guide for Clergy and Religious if you are the Subject of an Allegation of Abuse".
- Ensure survivor support information is more prominently displayed on websites and public materials.

Within 6 months

- Develop and implement a safeguarding strategy and accompanying implementation plan aligned to the eight National Safeguarding Standards.
- Introduce a central DBS monitoring and tracking system.
- Develop a safeguarding training needs analysis and compliance tracker.
- Deliver safeguarding training for SERV volunteers focusing on:
 - Boundaries
 - Information handling

- Reporting procedures
- Recording concerns
- Embed the communications plan across ministries.
- Develop safeguarding key performance indicators (KPIs) for trustee and safeguarding committee scrutiny.
- Develop survivor feedback and engagement mechanisms.
- Review complaints and whistleblowing policies to strengthen independence and support arrangements.

Within 12 months

- Produce an annual safeguarding report for Trustees and the wider Province.
- Introduce regular safeguarding audits of SERV and Edmund Rice Youth Camps.
- Develop a formal survivor engagement strategy with opportunities for survivors to contribute to safeguarding communications and learning.
- Embed Integrity in Ministry throughout the congregation and volunteer workforce.
- Introduce structured monitoring and review arrangements for safeguarding plans and respondent management.
- Evaluate safeguarding training effectiveness and impact on practice.
- Develop organisational safeguarding risk assessments and annual safeguarding self-assessment processes.
- Develop a system for capturing, analysing and reporting safeguarding trends, learning and organisational improvement outcomes.

7. Arrangements for follow-up

7.1 In line with the audit pathway, having received an overall grade of Firm Progress, the minimum period prior to a re-audit will be two years, subject to there being no indications of increased risk.

8. Appendix

Evidence provided

1. Christian Brothers 2013 Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure Document
2. Christian Brothers 2025 Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure Document
3. Christian Brothers 2026 Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy Document England 2026
4. Christian Brothers Code of Conduct
5. Christian Brothers Complaints Policy England 2025
6. Christian Brothers Low Level Concerns Policy
7. Christian Brothers Whistleblowing Policy
8. Christian Brothers Visitor Policy
9. Christian Brothers Safer Recruitment Policy
10. Meeting Minutes Safeguarding Committee 09.06.25, 11.12.25
11. List of Christian Brothers in England
12. Salford Edmund Rice Volunteers (SERV) Mission Statement
13. SERV Volunteer Safeguarding Agreement
14. SERV Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
15. Province Leader – Safeguarding 3 March 2022
16. Edmund Rice England Website Safeguarding Statement
17. CSSA English Poster – Liverpool
18. CSSA English Poster – Salford
19. Christian Brothers European Province Communications Document
20. Christian Brothers complaints England from 16.03.2025 to 12.03.26
21. CSSA Case Work

22. Email Communications 1
23. Email Communications 2
24. Solicitor Communications on Forwarding of Safety Information
25. File on Apology
26. Contact details for Safeguarding Team
27. Christian Brothers Flowchart – responding to allegations
28. Contract for RLSS – Signed – Completed
29. CSSA Contract 2024
30. RLSS Data Sharing Agreement
31. RLSS – Supply of Safeguarding Services Contract
32. CSSA Letter of Intent
33. Solicitor Communications on Forwarding of Safeguarding Information
34. Health Care Nurse in England
35. UK Community Catering & Housekeeping
36. Visit by member of Provincial Leadership Team to England Congregation
37. Care Plan Brother
38. DBS Certificates
39. Complaints Policy
40. Salford Volunteers (DBS) & Camp Co-ordinators contacts
41. Templates, Recruitment & Selection Checklist, Volunteer Application Form, Confidential Declaration Form, Character and Personal Reference Request and Confidentiality Declaration
42. RLSS Training Certificates safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead
43. Training Certificate CPD safeguarding coordinator England
44. Training Day Presentation National Board
45. Training SERV Salford Cert
46. Training safeguarding lead Dublin Ecclesiastical Provincial Area Meeting
47. Training safeguarding lead NBSCCCI National Conference 3rd, 4th & 5th September
48. Training safeguarding lead Train the Trainer Course – November 2025
49. Training safeguarding lead Trauma Informed Workshop Dublin Diocese
50. Safeguarding lead Introduction to Children First 2025
51. Safeguarding lead Certificate of Accreditation
52. UK Safeguarding awareness training – Copy Certificate and Power Point Presentation

53. Sexual Abuse Understanding the Dynamics 12th & 19th February
54. Data Protection Training May 2025
55. Safeguarding coordinator England Certificate
56. Christian Brothers Assembly 2025
57. Christian Brothers Safeguarding Training Plan 2025 - 2026
58. Salford Brothers & Volunteers DBS & Training List
59. Safeguarding Committee meeting Agenda November 2025
60. Safeguarding Committee agenda March 12th, 2026
61. CSSA Trustee Minutes
62. Email trail number 1
63. Email trail number 2
64. Blank care plan
65. Dignity and Respect Document 2024
66. Child protection procedures English Province 1999
67. Child Protection Guidelines of CB schools in England 1996
68. Letters to schools with guidelines 1996
69. Press statement England 1998
70. Child protection guidelines Irish Provinces 1993
71. Ian Elliott 2010 – NSBCCCI 2009 Safeguarding report published 19th May 2010
72. CBEP safeguarding Report Sept 2009
73. RLSS Safeguarding Congregation of Christian Brothers Trustees
74. Meeting 12.03.2026 Minutes of Safeguarding Committee
75. Safeguarding meeting minutes 19.02.2025