

Statement from the Irish Dominicans, 21 November 2022

We, the Irish Dominicans, sincerely apologise to the children and young people who were abused by members of the Irish Province. We fully accept that this caused them long lasting hurt and distress. It is a matter of immense regret and shame to all of us that these young people were abused while in our care.

We invite any person who was, at any time, abused by a member of the Dominican Province and who has not yet come forward, to make contact with us on safeguardingoffice@dominicans.ie - and to report the abuse to Tusla, Child and Family Agency, and the Gardai. Should anyone wish to contact us directly, we will meet them to listen to them and assist in any way we can.

We have been committed to working with survivors and their families over many years, work which will continue, as they so wish.

In total, 97 complaints of sexual abuse were made against 37 members of the province, 27 of whom are deceased and 6 are no longer members of the Order. Twenty-nine of those complaints relate to six of our members in Newbridge College, over a 40-year time-span reaching back to the 1950s.

We can confirm that €1,839,000 has been paid in settlements with survivors, €714,000 of which relates to 10 former pupils at Newbridge College. In addition, we have met the legal fees (totalling €547,000) for all parties involved in all cases, .

One of our members pleaded guilty, in three separate court cases, to sexually abusing ten young people, seven of whom were pupils at Newbridge College. Two other members of the province were found guilty before the courts of sexual offences against five children, not involving Newbridge College.

Those convicted are no longer members of the Order.

Safeguarding is an absolute priority for the province in all our ministries, and this will continue to be so. We will endeavour to ensure ongoing compliance with all statutory requirements in this area.

We have ongoing engagement with the statutory authorities and the National Board for Safeguarding of Children, as we do everything possible to ensure that child protection is to the forefront of our work and understood by all who engage in ministry within the Dominican province.

We again ask any person who has been abused by a member of the province, who has not as yet come forward, to contact us and the State authorities. We wish to express our willingness to meet them, listen to them and support them in any way we can.

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