

Written by our coordinator:

Comments for the Cumberlege Commission:

Firstly, there have been no reported allegations within the Ursuline Province of England and Wales. As such, I cannot comment on the way in which recommendations around dealing with allegations have been met.

The Nolan report emphasised that Parishes and Dioceses should be considered a priority in preparing a Programme for Action. This has certainly been the case, resulting in confusion around the relevancy of some issues for religious orders. Administrative forms, as a result, have sometimes proved irrelevant and difficult to complete, based as they have been on diocesan information.

This said there has been much progress in raising awareness of child protection and vulnerable adult issues.

In answering the specific questions around the implementation of Lord Nolan's Report, it is useful to bear in mind that, because of the absence of allegations within our Province, there is a degree of ignorance about some of the practical applications of policies and procedures.

Question 1:

I think the implementation of 'A Programme for Action' has worked well and there has been a determination and willingness on the part of religious to make it work.

The gaps, as I have said, are mainly around the confusion caused by differences between dioceses/parishes and religious orders and although I agree that there should be one policy for all, there are times when it needs to be a little more specific and perhaps some of the administrative forms could be more user friendly for religious.

Question 2:

I believe that the processes introduced nationally have struck a reasonable balance given the difficulties and sensitivity involved. Again, as we have not had to deal with an allegation, it is difficult to answer this question.

Question 3:

I believe that COPCA have achieved well in these areas within the time span, though I am not aware of any monitoring of the effectiveness of local arrangements.

I believe that COPCA has a role to play in the future as an advisory body and a monitoring agent. It can also continue to raise awareness of new issues and support national training for CPCs etc.

It would be useful if we could be kept informed of changes in post and who we need to contact directly for advice, information, etc. This is an area that appears to be problematic.

Question 4:

I am unaware of how well the structures are working elsewhere but I believe that, at the moment, they are sufficient for our own needs.

Question 5:

The policies and practices seem to me to be a good example of excellent practice though I have not had practical experience of them.