



Belvedere College SJ Statement on the Naming of Deceased Jesuits Against Whom Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse Have Been Made

On Wednesday, 12th February 2025, the Jesuit Order has placed in the public domain the names of fourteen deceased Jesuits against whom complaints of child sexual abuse have been made. The Order has also taken the decision to place in the public domain the name of a fifteenth deceased Jesuit about whom additional information has become available. In taking this action, the Order has implemented the recommendation of an Independent Working Group ('IWG') which was established to examine the files of deceased Jesuits who had been accused of child sexual abuse.

They are Fr Rupert Coyle (1896-1978); Fr Shaun Curran (1924-1999); Fr Brendan Kearney (1935-2014); Fr John T Kelly (1906-1977); Fr Patrick Kelly (1920-2012); Fr Kevin Laheen (1919-2019); Fr Henry (Harry) Lawlor (1911-1989); Fr John A (Jack) Leonard (1912-1992); Fr Finbarr Lynch (1933-2022); Fr Michael McGrath (1910-1989); Fr Oliver Joseph O'Brien (1920-1994); Br Edward O'Sullivan (1920-1996); Fr Diarmuid Ó Péicín (1916-2008); Br Douglas A Pill (1918-2003); Fr James Stephenson (1906-1979).

Five of those named are deceased Jesuits with allegations against them regarding their time in Belvedere College SJ. They are Fr. Rupert Coyle, SJ; Fr. Brendan Kearney, SJ, Fr. John (Jack) Leonard, SJ; Fr. Finbarr Lynch, SJ; and Fr. Oliver O'Brien, SJ. Three Jesuits were named previously by the Order, including, Fr Joseph Marmion, SJ, who taught at Belvedere College SJ. Fr. Paul Andrews and Fr. Dermot Casey did not teach at Belvedere College SJ.

The complaints concerning these Jesuits span a period of over 40 years from the 1940s until 1980s. The Order has set up a special page on the Province's website where all the documents concerning this naming process may be accessed, including, the full list of the fifteen named Jesuits and a Statement of Accountability.

Information about the IWG is also available on the special webpage, along with background information about the naming process and the IWG's Report. Details concerning a range of support services offered by the Order, in terms of its response to these allegations, are also available. These services include, for example, procedures for seeking redress and accessing funding for counselling. Click on this link to access this page: <https://jesuit.ie/naming-of-deceased-jesuits-regarding-child-sexual-abuse-complaints/>

Belvedere College SJ welcomes the Statement of the Jesuit Provincial, Father Shane Daly, SJ, who confirms that the Jesuit Order is pursuing a process of acknowledging child abuse perpetrated by Jesuits over the past 70 years. The Jesuits are reflecting upon their response to that abuse, and they acknowledge that the process is one that requires accountability, transparency, and the making of amends in relation to those who were sexually abused.

The Provincial also observes that, in the eyes of those who suffered abuse, it is the Order's public acceptance of its responsibility for what happened and its response to this, that carries a greater weight with them than the Order's offer of support. Father Shane states:

"We are truly ashamed that innocent young people were abused by those Jesuits who were supposed to be serving them and caring for them. To learn that much of their abuse could have been avoided, had timely and necessary action been taken by those to whom the abuse was made known, must surely compound the suffering of those who were abused. We put the good name of the institution before their suffering and for this we are truly sorry. Our expression of sorrow and regret for the suffering and pain inflicted on children who suffered abuse is real. But it will mean little if it is not accompanied by effective action such as the public naming we have done today, which is part of an ongoing process. Again, I want to



invite any person who was harmed by any Jesuit to consider speaking with us. We really want to hear from you."

The Jesuit Order undertakes to make public, in the future, the names of other deceased Jesuits who are the subject of child sexual abuse allegations in the event that further information is received which meets the criteria, stipulated by the IWG, for placing the names of such deceased Jesuits, who have been so accused, in the public domain.

Anyone with concerns or complaints regarding the deceased Jesuits who have been named today, or regarding any other Jesuit, is encouraged to contact the Order's Child Safeguarding Office and/or the appropriate authorities.

The Jesuit Order has set up a special Helpline which operates from 8am until 8pm daily, including weekends.

The Helpline number is: **083 087 4254**.

Further details may be obtained by contacting the following:

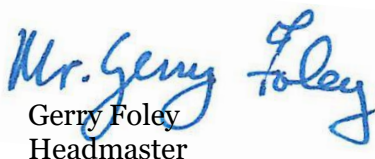
By Email: safeguarding@jesuit.ie

By telephone: Jesuit Provincialate at **00 353 1 4987333** (Mon – Fri, 9am to 4pm)

The Trustees, Board of Management, teachers, and staff of Belvedere College SJ wish to reassure our parents and students that child protection is foundational to the College. All Department of Education policies in this regard are fully implemented. The Board commissioned an expert in Child Safeguarding to carry out an independent audit of child protection policies and procedures in the College. The expert's report confirms that safeguarding procedures are robust, and extensive reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure that child protection remains a priority. The Board has committed to a full independent audit of child protection on a three-year cycle, with the next full audit scheduled for the autumn term of 2025. This is in addition to the existing measures in place for secondary schools, as required by the Department of Education.

The Trustees, the Board of Management, teachers, and the staff at Belvedere College, SJ, want to reassure our parents and our students, that child protection is of paramount importance for the College. All Department of Education policies in this regard are observed and implemented, fully. It is with deep sorrow that we, at Belvedere College, learn of five more Jesuits who, along with Joseph Marmion SJ, are accused of having abused children who had been sent to our College by their parents to be cared for and educated. Instead, they experienced abuse and betrayal.

Once again, Belvedere College extends its deepest apologies to all those who suffered abuse in our school. We sincerely hope that, through the process of redress and restorative justice, survivors may find peace.


Gerry Foley
Headmaster

13th February 2025