

# Parish Safeguarding Handbook



The  
Catholic  
Diocese of  
Nottingham

# Message from Bishop Patrick

***“As long as we love one another God will live in us and his love will be complete in us.” (1 John 4:12)***

*I commend this Parish Safeguarding Handbook to the attention of all Catholics within the Diocese of Nottingham, not just the Parish Priests and the Safeguarding Representatives. This is because throughout the Diocese we wish to promote a strong culture of safeguarding, where everyone feels loved and respected and is free from harm and abuse. This means that everyone of us has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of those who worship in our churches and chaplaincies, or who join us for any activity organised by Church members.*

*This duty to respect, love and safeguard other people is part of our calling as followers of Christ. Safeguarding is part and parcel of the DNA of every Christian, an essential characteristic of our identity as Christ’s followers, and so it must be reflected in the way we all seek to respect and care for others. We cannot simply delegate this duty of care to the priest and safeguarding representative, or the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding. Only if each one of us is engaged in this way of thinking and acting can we truly foster a culture of safeguarding throughout our diocese, one which will enable us to meet the eight standards of Safeguarding for the Catholic Church in England and Wales.*

*I therefore urge everyone to give their parish or chaplaincy safeguarding representative the support they need by joining with them to help foster a deeper and more evident culture of safeguarding. We can all play our part in ensuring that every single individual feels respected and safe within our Catholic parishes and chaplaincies. When Church activities are organised well, with regard to the safety and wellbeing of all, then we reduce the risk of avoidable harm to all participants, and we help create spaces of true welcome, care and respect where worship and ministry can be carried out safely.*

+ Patrick McKinney

Rt Rev Patrick McKinney  
Bishop of Nottingham



A healthy safeguarding culture allows the Church to be **open and welcoming**, offering a caring and supportive, **resourceful environment**.

That signifies an encouraging faith, one that is learning and developing forward, showing **compassion**, and **building trust** not only amongst its own Catholic communities but also within the wider public.



# Introduction

*This Parish Safeguarding Handbook has been developed to support parishes to safeguard Church communities and to consider their responsibility towards safeguarding the welfare of any person in the name of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Nottingham.*

*Everyone in the Church has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of those who worship in our Church or who join us for any activity facilitated by Church members.*

*When Church activities are organised well, with regard for the safety and wellbeing of all, we reduce the risk of avoidable harm to all participants and create spaces of true welcome in which relationships which are respectful and enriching can develop.*

*The Diocese of Nottingham's safeguarding practice in parishes works toward the Diocesan achievement to meet the eight standards for safeguarding in the Catholic Church in England and Wales.*



Director of Safeguarding

## The eight standards for safeguarding in the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

- 1 Embed safeguarding in the Church body's leadership, governance, ministry and culture
- 2 Communicate the Church's safeguarding message
- 3 Engage with and care for those who report having been harmed
- 4 Effectively manage allegations and concerns
- 5 Manage and support subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)
- 6 Implement robust human resource management
- 7 Provide and access training and support for safeguarding
- 8 Quality assure compliance to continuously improve practice



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# 1. Parish Roles and Responsibilities

## Parish Priest

The parish priest holds overall responsibility for the safeguarding in the parish and has a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community. To assist the parish priest in the safeguarding implementation and decision-making members of the Church community can be consulted.

## Appoint

An appropriately experienced named parish safeguarding representative (PSR) to work with the parish priest (see model PSR role description).

## Parish Pastoral Council

Safeguarding should be an agenda item on the PPC's meeting where the parish safeguarding representative and parish priest can discuss the implementation of safeguarding practice and raise any operational issues.

## Safer Recruitment, Support and Training

Follow the diocesan safer recruitment policy, practice and guidance, and use the forms/templates provided.

Ensure each volunteer, employee, and cleric is aware of the safeguarding policy/guidance, and is trained appropriately for his or her role(s).

Ensure that the diocesan insurance will cover all the activities undertaken in the parish which involve children, young people and adults.

## Display

The safeguarding policy statement in a prominent place in the church; likewise the poster with the parish safeguarding representative's details, and the contact mobile number, along with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding's name and mobile telephone number.

If the parish has a website, ensure that safeguarding arrangements are displayed clearly and are easy to access. The minimum requirements for a parish website are to display:

- Safeguarding policy statement;
- Parish Safeguarding Representative's details, email and contact number;
- Diocesan Director of Safeguarding's mobile telephone number;
- Link to the diocesan website with reference to where the diocesan safeguarding practice and guidance can be found.

***The Parish Safeguarding Handbook (or a link to it) should also be visible.***

The diocesan safeguarding communications plan addresses how the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding communicates safeguarding in the parish – this can be found at:  
[www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)

## **Respond**

Follow the procedure to deal with safeguarding allegations and concerns (see page 25).

Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations in line with the policy, practice and guidance.

Ensure that known offenders or others who pose a risk to others are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding (see page 34).

Comply with all data protection legislation in regard to processing (eg storing) data about any parish staff, volunteers, and any safeguarding records.

Ensure activity risk assessments are completed and reviewed for each activity that involves children or adults at risk and organised in the name of the Church.

## **Review and Report Progress**

The PSR should report to the PPC about safeguarding as a standing agenda item at each meeting. The annual audit review should take place and be discussed at least once each year at a PPC meeting, and any actions that may be required should be openly discussed.

## **Hiring-Out Church Premises**

Ensure that a hall agreement is always used when anybody / group / organisation hires Church premises for activities that involve children, young people or adults at risk.



## 2. Diocese Role in Supporting the Parish

### Safeguarding Policy and Guidance

The Diocese is responsible for supporting parishes in implementing the diocesan safeguarding policy practice and guidance. This includes monitoring the quality of safeguarding arrangements in the parishes.

### Safeguarding Advice and Support

The safeguarding team offers safeguarding advice and support to parishes. The parish must report any safeguarding allegation or concerns within 24 hours of the concern arising. Advice will be given on how best to respond. The team will manage all allegations / concerns of Church-related cases and advise on other areas of safeguarding concerns.

### Safeguarding Training

The Diocese is responsible for the provision of safeguarding training.

### Safer Recruitment Support

The safeguarding team will be the central point for advice, processing DBS checks, and supporting parishes in the safer recruitment process. The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding is responsible for the risk assessment of any blemished DBS.

### Scrutiny of Safeguarding

The Diocesan Trustees' safeguarding subcommittee, a committee of the Diocesan Board of Directors, and independent professionals, provides scrutiny of the safeguarding provision across the Diocese. The professional advisers offer advice and scrutiny of the operational safeguarding arrangements to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding and the Trustees to enable the Board of Directors to develop and implement the diocesan safeguarding strategy.

The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency quality assures and audits the diocesan safeguarding provision.

### Whistleblowing

The Diocese of Nottingham has a whistleblowing policy in place, which is available for consultation in appropriate circumstances.

### Complaints Procedure

The Diocese of Nottingham has a complaints procedure for any complaint made about the handling of a safeguarding concern or allegation. This procedure is displayed on the Diocesan website.

*"Everyone in the Church  
has a responsibility to  
safeguard and promote the  
wellbeing of those who  
worship in our Church"*

## Introduction



# 2. Safer Recruitment

**Safely recruiting is the first key step in reducing risk in the parish.**

The Diocese of Nottingham is responsible for the appointment of those working with children, young people, and adults, paid or unpaid. Often the responsibility is delegated to the parish priest. At least two individuals (who could include the parish priest) must be responsible for recruitment. All those involved in recruitment must be capable and competent, trained in safer recruitment, and able to keep personal matters confidential.

Recruitment packs for volunteers and employees are available at [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)

The following flowchart outlines the recruitment process. The full safer recruitment practice and guidance can be found at [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)





# Safer Recruitment of New Volunteers

## Planning

The parish priest or group leader passes information on any new potential volunteer to the PSR who ensures that a role description for the post exists.

Consult with the diocesan safeguarding team regarding recruitment to determine the level of DBS Disclosure required, if any, and other safeguarding considerations.

## Registration

The safeguarding representative issues the new volunteer recruitment pack to the potential volunteer.

The potential volunteer completes and returns the pack to the PSR.

## Selection

The PSR ensures that a formal discussion about the role is undertaken by the most appropriate person (usually the relevant group leader).

## Checks

For DBS eligible roles the PSR will verify the ID and send off for the references.

*(ID checks should still be made for non-DBS roles to verify the individual's identity).*

The PSR sends the DBS pack and copies of ID to the safeguarding office for DBS submission. Written references are to be confirmed as acceptable by the PSR or another parish lead for the recruited role.

The DBS check is managed through the safeguarding office.



Confirmation of appointment, pending satisfactory references and DBS disclosure.





# Post-Appointment

## Recordkeeping

- A letter of appointment is signed by the parish priest and sent to the new volunteer.
- Two copies of the volunteer agreement are to be signed by the new volunteer; one is returned to the parish and one is retained by the volunteer.
- A code of conduct, details of policy and procedures, and safeguarding courses to be completed, are given to the volunteer.

All paperwork is to be kept in a secure, locked, non-portable cabinet, and volunteer details are recorded in a 'volunteer record book' or similar.

## Support & Development

Support arrangements and supervision should be agreed if required – together with an induction.

Training and development opportunities should be discussed.



# Safer Recruitment of Employees

## Planning

Clarify the case for a new appointment, position within the parish, and management and supervision arrangements.

Consult the policy and practice guidance regarding recruitment to determine the level of DBS Disclosure required, if any, and other safeguarding considerations.

## Registration

Develop (or update) a job description, person specification and application form for the role.

Advertise as required, and ensure applicants are notified that the following will be required:

1. verification of identity at or after interview;
2. at least two satisfactory references, one of whom should be the current manager, if employed;
3. a DBS Disclosure if the role is eligible;
4. disclosure of any previous relevant convictions at interview, or another agreed time after interview.

## Selection

Shortlist from the completed applications and invite candidates to a formal interview / discussion.

A panel interview, with set questions and scoring sheet, for employees; and a formal discussion for volunteers.

The letter of appointment should be sent, pending the required checks.

## Checks

Take up references, using the reference pro-forma.

Check the applicant's right to work in the UK.

Verify the applicant's ID.

Submit a DBS application form, if required.

Undertake any health checks, where required.



Confirmation of appointment, pending the above.



# Post-Appointment

## Recordkeeping

- The probationary period and expectations should be clarified in writing.
- The induction process, including safeguarding practice, policies and procedures, should be explained.

## Support & Development

- Supervision and support should be made available.
- Training and development opportunities should be provided.
- Appraisal times and formats should be explained.

# 4. Training

## Training

A healthy Catholic Church community is one which ensures and nurtures the wellbeing of all. Safeguarding therefore needs to be embedded in all aspects of the life and ministry of the Church, and safeguarding training and development is seen in this context. It is essential that parishes understand safeguarding as a theological imperative, rooted in the love of God, and being made present in the basic commitments to giving equal worth to all, practising reciprocal pastoral care, and treating those who are most vulnerable with respect and dignity.

Safeguarding training is essential to drive the Catholic Church in cultural change and to promote safe and healthy Church communities which resonate through the Diocese of Nottingham's ministry, encouraging outreach and growth to the parish communities.

As a charitable organisation regulated by the Charity Commission, and subject to its safeguarding practice guidance, the Diocese provides free safeguarding training for all volunteers, employees, and clergy.

The diocesan training strategy can be found at [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)



**This training page will be amended in line with the CSSA national mandatory training in 2023. Please refer to the diocesan website and email information for the changes.**

**Recommended** training is not mandatory.

**Required** training is mandatory.

<b>CSSA Basic awareness online module</b>	Please refer to the diocesan website for updates on this training.
<b>CSSA Leadership Modules</b>	Please refer to the diocesan website for updates on this training.
<b>CSSA Volunteer Modules</b>	Please refer to the diocesan website for updates on this training.
<b>Diocesan leadership safeguarding course</b>	Required for all clergy in active ministry, and leaders.
<b>Diocesan volunteer safeguarding course</b>	Required for PSR'S and recommended for roles that require a DBS.
<b>Recognising domestic abuse</b>	Required for clergy in active ministry and PSRs. Recommended for leaders of groups / projects.
<b>Understanding sex offenders in Church communities</b>	Recommended for any clergy, staff or volunteers.
<b>Bite-size training sessions on demand</b>	Recommended for any clergy, staff or volunteers.

# 5. Safeguarding Children

## Abuse and Neglect of Children

### Statutory Definitions

Working together to safeguard children is a government legislation document and defines the following as abuse (although not limited to):

**Physical abuse** – including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning suffocating.

**Emotional abuse** – including conveying to a child that they are inadequate, blaming, humiliation, intimidating, controlling, isolation, verbal abuse, seeing or hearing ill treatment of another, serious bullying including cyber bullying.

**Sexual abuse** – including assault by penetration (rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing or touching outside of clothing, looking at sexual images or involved in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

**Neglect** – including failure to provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter; failing to protect a child from emotional and physical harm or danger; to not provide adequate supervision and / or access to appropriate medical care or treatment: this can also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

**Sexual exploitation** – sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children or young people may be tricked into believing that they are in caring, loving relationships that are consensual. Being invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol can be part of the abuse. They may be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked into the UK or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

**Domestic Abuse** – witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

**Bullying and Cyber bullying** – bullying is hurtful behaviour towards someone else – such as name calling, pushing, hitting, threatening, spreading rumours, or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere, at home, school, at work or online. It is usually repeated hurtful behaviour over a period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying happens online, using social networks, mobile phones, games and is often called cyber bullying. A child can feel there is no escape because it can happen anywhere.

**Online Abuse** – the internet, mobile phones, and online gaming (eg Xbox / PlayStation) have created an environment where a growing culture of grooming has risen, and children are targeted by abuse. Adults may target chatrooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. In some cases adults will pretend to be children in order to groom children and obtain images or arrange meetings.

**Electronic Images** – it is a sexual offence to download, keep, or distribute indecent images of children. Such offences are sometimes referred to as no contact sexual offences. However it must be remembered that children have been abused in the making of the images. Texting sexual messages and photographs (referred to as sexting) can be distressing and problematic for children and young people.

# 6. Safeguarding Adults

## Abuse and Neglect of Adults

The abuse or neglect of adult can happen anywhere, and we all have a duty of care to protect those at risk of harm. All adults have a human right to choose how they live, even if it appears to involve a degree of risk. We should support adults in making choices, to live as independently as possible, and to be treated with respect and dignity.

## Who Abuses Adults?

Anyone can potentially be an abuser of an adult, whether another adult or a child.

Abuse may be unintended, a consequence of ignorance, a lack of awareness, or a deliberate act. It could also arise through frustration or a lack of support.

The list can include:

- Relatives
- Carers
- Workers in places of worship
- People who themselves are vulnerable and / are users of a care service
- Fraudsters / confidence tricksters who prey on people in their homes, whether legitimate organisations or not

## Relatives who are Main Carers

Carers can become stressed, exhausted and frustrated without respite or support. This can lead to unintended poor care or abuse. The relative carer could also be subject to abuse from the person they care for, which can be endured for long periods and not reported for many complex reasons.

## Institutions

People living in institutions will have a degree of vulnerability and require support. Some members of a parish may visit adults in institutions – prisons, hospital, care homes, etc. If there are concerns identified on these visits about the care, or about how someone is being treated, the safeguarding team should be contacted. You can also refer directly to the institution, or raise concerns with the appropriate inspection or



complaints body. The Care Quality Commission in England is responsible for inspecting and regulating the quality of care in residential care homes and hospitals. The local government ombudsman deals with complaints that relate to adult social care. HM Inspectorate of Prisons in England inspects prisons.

## Definitions of Adult Abuse

Care and support statutory guidance categorise and defines adult abuse in terms of:

**Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling intimidating, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Sexual abuse** – including rape and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressurised into consenting.

**Physical abuse** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

**Neglect or acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance, or financial transactions, or misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

**Discriminatory abuse** – including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment. Domestic abuse is usually a systematic, repeated, and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which an abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.

**Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one off incidents to ongoing ill treatment. It can be through neglect, or poor professional practice as a result of the structure of policies, processes, and practices within an organisation.

**Modern slavery** – including human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude: and traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

# 7. Responding to Safeguarding Allegation or Concern

## **If you have a concern that a child or adult is (or may be) being abused.**

Respond to the victim / survivor by listening and taking the disclosure seriously. Explain what will happen next and check out support requirements. They should be informed that their identity and the identity of the respondent will be shared with the diocesan safeguarding office, and may be shared with the statutory agencies, if there is any current risk to children or adults. The concern or allegation should not be shared with anyone other than those who need to know (eg the statutory agencies, PSR and safeguarding office).

**Emergency:** If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the emergency services on 999.

**Non-emergency:** Contact the PSR or parish priest in the first instance. They must then contact the diocesan safeguarding office. If neither are available, contact the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding directly. If the concern arises in an activity, discuss with the group / activity leader, who will contact the PSR or parish priest.

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding within 24 hours.

If the PSR / parish priest or the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding are not available within 24 hours, contact Children's Social Care or Adult Social Care and / or the police directly, if the concern is that a child or adult is being abused. Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and /or the police if the concern is that a Church employee, volunteer or cleric may be abusing a child or adult.

Advise the PSR or parish priest as soon as possible that you have made a referral; they will advise the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.

## **If in doubt don't delay – seek advice from the statutory agencies.**

Do not contact the respondent or anyone who may be implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure until advice has been sought from the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding or statutory agencies.

Record the details of the concern or allegation. Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time (usually it will not be), make a written record as soon as possible afterwards or before the end of the day. Record the time, date, location, persons present and how the concern or allegation was received, eg by telephone, face-to-face conversation, or letter. The record should include details of information provided to that person as well as the information received. Always sign and date the record. Keep it factual. Pass on a copy to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding (and/or the PSR / parish priest). The records should be kept secure and confidential.

## **If the concern is about a child or adult:**

The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will act in line with diocesan practice and guidance. They will offer advice, support and guidance, and help to make the required referrals within 24 hours of the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding receiving the concerns: this would be to children's / adult social care or the police.

There should be close communication between the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding, the PSR, and the parish priest until the situation is resolved. One of the Vicars General should be informed.

## **If the concern also involves Church personnel:**

The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will act in line with the diocesan policies and procedures.

They will offer advice, support and guidance and refer the concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and / or police within 24 hours. The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will take over the management of the safeguarding concern in conjunction with the response group (which will be convened within 48 hours), and statutory agencies.

There may also be a requirement for parish representatives to attend a subsequent response group/s. If there are doubts about whether or not to make a referral and under what route, the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will seek advice from the LADO.



## **Please note that the procedure is the same for non-recent abuse.**

A balance must be struck between protecting children and adults and respecting the rights of the person against whom an allegation is made. In such circumstances the welfare of the child, young person or adult must come first. The rights of the person against whom the allegation is made are important and must be given due consideration, once the immediate safety and protection of the child, young person or vulnerable adult has been assured.

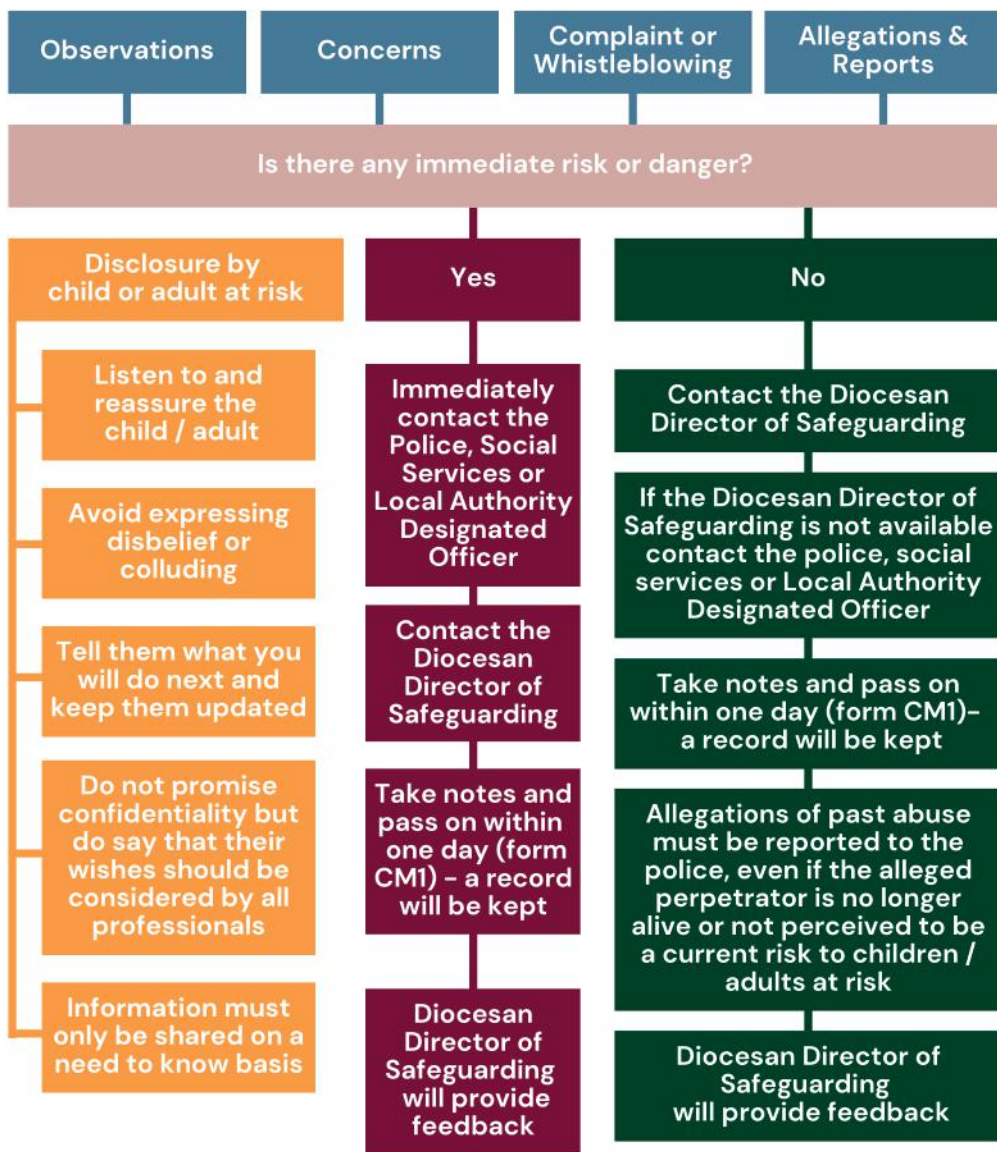
Managing allegations and concerns documents can be found at [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)



# Responding to a Safeguarding Allegation or Concern

Allegation of harm of a child or adult at risk by a member of clergy / religious / Church personnel comes to light, including:

- inappropriate behaviour,
- possible harm caused to a child or adult at risk,
- possible crime committed against a child or adult at risk.





# 8. Responding to a Disclosure of Abuse

## Respond



### Do:

- Listen.
- Take seriously what is said.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how; open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- **Remain calm.**
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check (if face to face) whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately.
- At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/ PSR / Diocesan Director of Safeguarding, and statutory authorities, what is believed to have happened, when, and where.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.



### Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (eg that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.



## **Record**

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place, and the actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.



## **Report**

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police.
- Otherwise report to your activity leader / PSR / parish priest immediately.
- Within 24 hours the PSR / parish priest reports the concerns to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will advise regarding reporting to the statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt seek advice from children's / adult's social care or the police.

## **Non recent abuse**

- Non recent allegations of abuse must be treated as seriously as recent abuse. It can take an adult many years to disclose sexual abuse that happened to them either as a child or young adult.

# 9. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse affects so many people and parishes can provide support to victims and survivors by displaying and providing information.

**The definition of domestic abuse is** ‘any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional.’

Domestic abuse can take different forms, including:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial abuse
- coercive and controlling behaviour, and gaslighting / emotional abuse
- digital / online abuse
- so-called ‘honour-based’ violence
- forced marriage
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

## **What do you need to do in a parish?**

The PSR and parish priest to discuss / introduce at the Parish Pastoral Council meetings the diocesan policy and statement of domestic abuse.

Follow the process on how to respond to safeguarding concerns or allegations.

Support those in leadership positions, pastoral, and safeguarding roles to engage in diocesan domestic abuse training.

Consider the best place to display the domestic abuse statement, including information about helplines and local services.

Discuss domestic abuse in appropriate contexts such as marriage preparation.

Challenge inappropriate comments and behaviour by Church members.

## Ideas for Good Practice

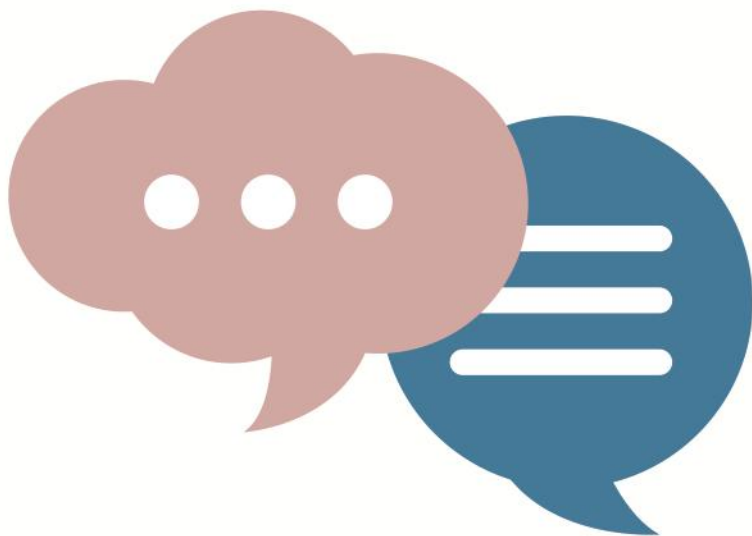
Encourage leaders to speak against domestic abuse in teachings, Masses, prayers, and in parish magazines/newsletters/websites.

Invite local domestic abuse support agencies/groups to speak.

Consider including activities around healthy relationships within activities for children and young people.

Encourage others to attend the diocesan recognising domestic abuse training.

The diocesan domestic abuse policy can be found at [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)



# 10. Supporting Victims and Survivors of Abuse

**Care and support** of those who have been harmed by abuse with whom we build these relationships will be foremost, ensuring that any engagement does not create anxiety or the possibility of re-traumatisation for the individual involved. Positive engagement can be part of the healing process for the person who has been harmed by abuse, and care will be taken to ensure that those we offer support in the way in which the victim / survivor leads. (see the victim and survivor care charter at [www.dioceseofnottingham/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham/safeguarding))

## Support following Alleged Abuse by Church Personnel

All concerns or allegations of abuse by a Church employee, volunteer or cleric must be reported to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding. The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will arrange for a support person to be offered to all alleged adult victims / survivors. The role of the support person is set out in the diocesan managing allegations practice guidance and concerns document, and roles and responsibilities document. What the support person offers will be agreed with the alleged victim / survivor, but it is likely they will:

Listen to and represent the victim's / survivor's pastoral needs.

Identify any therapeutic or other needs and offer choices as to how these can best be met.

Record any meetings or contact they have with the victim / survivor.

Share relevant information with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.

Victims / survivors who are children or young people will require specialist support. The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will seek advice from children's social care to access support from a professional agency, as required.

Support for families of victims / survivors and for the parish is co-ordinated by the response group in conjunction with statutory agencies. This would involve discussion with the PSR and parish priest.

In addition, dioceses have access to specialist support services for victims / survivors of abuse. This may be through safe spaces, or a commissioned external service. The nature of any ongoing support needs will be agreed by the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding with the victim / survivor.



## Support to Parishes and Others Affected by Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations

When a member of the clergy leaves a parish in which he has lived and worked for some time, there is usually a period of notice during which he can take his leave and parishioners can say their goodbyes. The pastoral relationship between the cleric and parishioners can be very close, so when it is ending it is to be expected that there will be some sense of loss and sadness; but there is also an opportunity to mark his departure.

When someone in a position of office or ministry must step aside at short notice, or is suspended because of a safeguarding concern or allegation, a crisis arises for them, but also for the parishioners who have had no warning. The feelings that can arise for parishioners in these circumstances can be very varied and can include disbelief about the allegation, defensiveness about the respondent, shock, disappointment, anger, and confusion. People can feel abandoned, especially if they had been working closely with that person in some element of parish life.

The response group will advise the actions to take, in close liaison with a Vicar General, who should support the affected parish. During the period of investigation, which may last for many months, the information that can be shared with the parish and its congregation will be limited. Advice and support are available from the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding, the Vicar General and the diocesan communications department.

### Support for the Respondent

Support for the respondent is provided by a link person. All Church personnel who are the subject of a concern or allegation will be offered a link person.

Where statutory agencies are involved, they will inform the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding about when and what they can tell the respondent about an allegation that has been made. It may be that the statutory agencies themselves inform the respondent as part of their own investigative practices, eg where a voluntary interview or arrest is necessary.

Where the statutory agencies are not involved the response group will determine when and what the respondent should be told. This will normally be done by the Bishop's nominated representative and the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding, at an arranged meeting with the respondent. At this meeting the respondent will also be offered a link person.

The role of the link person is set out in the diocesan managing allegations and concern practice and guidance. What the link person offers will be agreed with the respondent, but it is likely they will:

- Keep the person up to date with the progress of their case;
- Help with access to advice and additional support;
- Make and keep a written record of any meetings or contact with the respondent and share relevant information with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding;
- For clergy or lay workers whose accommodation is provided by the Church, alternative temporary accommodation for the respondent may need to be considered by the diocese through the response group.



# 11. Recording, Data Protection, and Information Sharing

## Opening a Church Safeguarding Record

Good record keeping is an important part of the safeguarding process. A record / case should be opened whenever a safeguarding concern or allegation occurs in a parish. The record should include key contact details, dates of when the information became known, and the nature of the concerns. The record should include ongoing actions with dates, other key documents on the case record, and the record closure date. Records should use straightforward language and be concise and accurate so that they can be understood by anyone not familiar with the case. This information will be passed onto the Diocese for any further enquiries. Please use Form CMI.

## Record Retention and Security

The safeguarding records, whether electronic or paper, must be stored securely by the parish priest and the PSR. This should include identifying who should have access to them. Records in relation to safeguarding issues, even if they have not been proven, should be maintained in accordance with the Church's retention guidance. If the parish priest moves from the parish, the records should be passed to the new parish priest.

## Data Protection and Information Sharing

In May 2018 the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 replaced the Data Protection Act 1998. The GDPR contains the principles governing the use of personal data. It should be noted that the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 place greater significance on organisations being accountable and transparent in relation to their use of personal data. Parishes handling personal data need to have the proper arrangements for collecting, storing and sharing information.

Personal information in relation to safeguarding will often be sensitive and is likely to be classed as what is called 'special categories of personal data' under the GDPR, which means extra care will need to be taken when handling such data. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware

that the Data Protection Act 2018 includes specific reference to processing data in relation to safeguarding children and adults at risk, and allows individuals to share, in certain situations, personal data without consent (see below).

***The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe; and this can equally be said to apply to vulnerable adults.***

## Reporting Concerns about Adults

Referrals of suspected abuse are made to adult social services and the police. Where possible, for a person aged 18 or over, this should be done with their written consent.

The starting point is the presumption that an adult can give consent and has the mental capacity to do so. The provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 are complex and questions and concerns about consent and mental capacity should always be discussed with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.

## Sharing Without Consent

Information can be shared legally without consent, if a person is unable to or cannot reasonably be expected to gain consent from the individual concerned, or if to gain consent could place somebody at risk.

Relevant personal data can be shared lawfully without consent if it is to keep a child or vulnerable adult safe from neglect or physical, emotional or mental harm, or if it is protecting their physical, mental or emotional well-being.

Never make these decisions on your own. If you are going to share personal data, this should always be discussed with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding. Of course, you may be able to share data, at least initially, without identifying the individual concerned, both within the Church and with the statutory services.

The most important consideration is whether the sharing of information is likely to support the safeguarding of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.



# 12. Managing Those Who May Present a Risk

The Church provides a welcoming and open environment, and we encourage anyone who wants to worship. To ensure the Church provides a safe place for everyone, we have to ensure that known persons of risk have a safeguarding plan in place. This may include an individual who is a registered sex or violent offender, a known risk for non-criminal reasons or has displayed concerning or threatening behaviour to others.

Some examples of the risk that individuals may pose to children, young people and adults are:

**Sexual offences – against both adults and children:** including accessing indecent images of children on the internet.

**Financial abuse:** targeting of vulnerable adults for financial gain, for example, asking for money, the acceptance of large 'gifts', or offering to do a job for someone at an extortionate rate of pay.

Always contact the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding as soon as possible if you learn that any of the following people worships in your parish:

- Anyone who admits to being an abuser, including non-recent abuse;
- Anyone placed on the sex offenders' register with a violent offence or conviction and/or who is barred from working with children or adults by the Disclosure and Barring Service;
- Anyone who may pose a risk to other parishioners due to their behaviour, irrespective of their criminal status;
- Anyone who is subject to an investigation for suspected abuse, including possession of indecent images of children, and / or is suspended from their usual role.

This could include a person in relation to whom:

- An allegation of abuse against a child or adult has been investigated, but the matter has not proceeded to court, or the person has been acquitted, or the matter is currently the subject of proceedings in the criminal or civil courts, but the person may still pose a risk;
- A grievance or complaint has been received alleging inappropriate behaviour, which is not criminal;
- There have been concerns about the person's alleged abusive behaviour to a previous or current partner or family member.



If the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding is made aware by any other source of any person in the above categories who is intending to or is worshipping at a local parish, they will notify the parish priest in the first instance.

The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will determine the appropriate action to be taken to best safeguard the parish and its congregation based on the particular facts and circumstances of each case. They will undertake a risk assessment to establish a safeguarding plan.

In developing a safeguarding plan, the individual, parish priest, PSR, police, probation, social care, health care professionals may be involved in the process, dependent on each case.

If a person is assessed as posing a risk to children or adults, the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding, together with any statutory agencies involved, will support the parish to:

- Maintain the highest levels of confidentiality unless there is a breach of the agreement and it is necessary to inform others to protect a child or vulnerable adult;
- Agree with the individual that they worship elsewhere if their victim or their family worship in the same parish;
- Ensure the individual is never offered any official role, whether paid or unpaid, in the parish, or position of responsibility where they may be trusted by others;
- Consider whether, with the individual's agreement and that of any statutory authorities involved, the congregation should be informed;
- Meet with the individual to draft a safeguarding agreement, setting out the parameters of their behaviour in the parish setting.

The safeguarding agreement may include the following elements:

- Attending designated services or meetings only;
- Sitting apart from children;
- Staying away from areas of the building where children or vulnerable adults meet;
- Attending a house group where there are no children or vulnerable adults;
- Declining hospitality where there are children or vulnerable adults;
- Never being alone with children or vulnerable adults;
- Never working or be part of a mixed group with children or vulnerable adults;
- Taking no role in the parish which gives them status or authority as others may deem that person to be trustworthy.

The safeguarding agreement will be monitored and reviewed at least annually, dependent on risk.

# 13. Creating a Safe Environment

## 13.1 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SAFE PRACTICE.

### **Leaders and helpers are expected to:**

Promote wellbeing.

Ensure the safety of all children and young people by ensuring group sessions are safely planned and effectively supervised.

Foster teamwork and co-operation between everybody, promoting trust and mutual respect.

Discourage and stop rough or dangerous play, bullying, inappropriate language or other inappropriate behaviour.

Treat all children and young people fairly and not show favouritism.

Be positive, approachable and offer praise to promote the objectives of the group always.

Listen sensitively and encourage communication between adults and children or young people.

Respond to concerns and allegations promptly and appropriately in line with national procedures.

Promote autonomy and dignity.

Ensure the rights and responsibilities of children and young people are enforced.

Promote the full participation and involvement of all children and young people, recognising and addressing the additional needs of some children and young people eg disability.

Constructively challenge all discrimination and encourage children and young people to not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, ability, social class, race, cultural background, religious beliefs, or sexual identity.

Respect, promote and support the right of children and young people to make their own choices and decisions, provided this does not threaten the rights, safety, and legitimate interests of others.

Respect the right of children and young people to personal privacy.

Encourage children and young people to take responsibility for their own self-care as far as possible eg assistance with toileting and dressing.

Respect and listen to the opinions of children and young people.

Encourage children and young people to point out behaviours or attitudes that they do not like.

Encourage children and young people to take responsibility for their own conduct.

Ensure that sanctions do not humiliate or harm a child or young person. Administer first aid in the presence of others and without removing the clothing of a child or young person unless necessary.

## **13.2 Boundaries and Power**

Establish appropriate boundaries between pastoral care and personal lives in relationships with other leaders, helpers, children and young people.

Not abuse the position of trust for personal benefit eg financial gain, sexual gratification.

Be conscious of explicit and implicit power vested in the role of group leader, supervisor of adult helper.

Acknowledge the limitations of time, experience, skill and competence – know where and how to ask for support when needed.

Deal with differences in opinion with respect.

Work to people's strengths, and never bully, abuse, manipulate or denigrate.

### 13.3 Acceptable Touch

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, is wholly appropriate.

The following guidelines regarding touching are suggested:

- Always ask permission.
- Be mindful of your body position.
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be in response to a child's needs and not related to the helper's needs. It should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the parish volunteer / employee.
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual and / or abusive / offensive.
- Allow the child to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances (eg when they need medical attention).

In addition:

- You can allow people you support to give you brief hugs if you feel comfortable with this.
- You can allow people you support to hold hands or link arms with you to help with travel and stability.
- You should discourage people you support from touching your face; you can offer your hand instead.
- You should discourage people you support from sitting on your lap; you can offer to sit side by side.
- You should avoid using touch if the person you support is very distressed and is unlikely to tolerate it.

*Ensure that parish volunteers / employees at all levels take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be encouraged to challenge one another if necessary. Concerns about possible abuse or inappropriate behaviour should always be reported.*

## 13.4 Church Activities – Children

Church activities that involve children need to ensure good practice standards: recruitment of activity leaders; DBS checking; staffing ratios; suitability of premises; health and safety arrangements; and facilities for children with special needs.

Anyone working or supporting children will always require DBS clearance.

The minimum staffing levels for groups should be as follows:

<b>0–2 years</b>	<b>1 Adult to 3 Children</b>	<b>1:3</b>
<b>2–3 years</b>	<b>1 Adult to 4 Children</b>	<b>1:4</b>
<b>4–8 years</b>	<b>1 Adult to 6 Children</b>	<b>1:6</b>
<b>9–12 years</b>	<b>1 Adult to 8 Children</b>	<b>1:8</b>
<b>13–18 years</b>	<b>1 Adult to 10 Children</b>	<b>1:10</b>

Each activity should have at least two group workers, even for smaller groups, and if possible, one male and one female. Adult ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, adult numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved. When children and young people are identified as having additional needs that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist care or support, this must be discussed with the child's parent or carer and the child if appropriate.



## Young Helpers

Helping in activities for children can be an opportunity for people under 18 to participate in parish life. If your parish provides opportunities for young people to serve in this way ensure that there is a five-year age gap between these young people and the children they are helping with.

It is best to designate any young person helping in this way as a 'helper' rather than a leader, and to ensure they are supervised by an adult who has been safely recruited, and who can take overall responsibility for the leadership of the group. You should avoid counting these young people as part of the adult / child ratios outlined above; they are additional helpers, not part of the core team. It is particularly important to follow the lone working rule, and not to consider an older child who is helping out to be the equivalent of an adult.

### 13.5 All Groups and Activities

Undertake a risk assessment (see the diocesan activity risk assessment guidance template).

A registration form must be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities which should include up-to-date information including parents' contact numbers, medical information (eg allergies) and any special needs (See CASE forms in the parish safeguarding toolkit at [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)).

- An attendance register must be kept and be available at all group meetings.
- A first aid kit must be available on any premises that are used by children.
- An accident and incident logbook must be available, and all accidents must be recorded. The logbook should be stored in a secure place. Any significant incidents must be recorded (eg a fight between children).
- There should be access to a telephone, if possible.
- On premises where children's groups meet, the ChildLine and Family Lives telephone numbers should be displayed.
- Parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car, and before any photography or images are taken (see model consent form – transport).

In addition, when taking children offsite:

- The parish priest must be informed and agree to the activity.
- Details of the activity and any itinerary must be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
- Details of the activity and a list of contacts must be left with someone in the parish.

- Details of the activity and arrangements must be given to the parish priest or PSR.
- A risk assessment must be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by insurance.
- A leader must be designated to take responsibility for first aid.

*Many of these items are equally applicable to groups involving vulnerable adults.*

## **13.6 Parish Activity Risk Assessment**

Any parish activity including children or adults will require a risk assessment to be completed, and the following questions to be considered in your planning when completing it.

Risk assessment should be completed by the leader of the activity (the parish priest and / or PSR can assist if needed) and made available to other staff / volunteers of the activity / project for reference. A copy should be given to the PSR.

This list is not exhaustive, and contains safeguarding risk assessment and some health and safety elements, but a risk assessment should address the:

- Type of activity
- Venue / premises – health and safety; fire safety (see the health and safety guidance elsewhere on the diocesan website)
- Equipment
- Transport

**List what risks you have considered and the measures put into place, such as:**

- A register where required
- Participants; adult, children, adults and children mixed groups
- Staffing and ratios; are all volunteers safely recruited?
- Are DBS volunteers required for children's groups or are parents responsible for children?
- Are adults at risk attending and does the group involve regulated activity – do the staff / volunteers require a DBS for adults – always check with the safeguarding office and provide a role description for volunteers.
- Procedures; clearly use signs to direct people
- Food, drinks, allergies, kitchen access, slips, trips, falls
- Do you display signs outlining acceptable behaviour?
- Health and medical needs; questions to ask include:
  - Are the first aid facilities (a stocked first aid box) and training adequate and appropriate for the activity?

- Are arrangements in place for those with additional needs, such as a responsible support / adult?
- Are arrangements in place for those with medical needs, including those needing to take regular medication, and those who have irregular sleep behaviours (such as sleepwalking for trips off site)?
- Are arrangements in place for those with allergies or phobias, and those who suffer from travel sickness? (for trips off site)
- Are arrangements in place for those with additional dietary needs and requirements?
- Financial risk; contingency and emergency planning– who would you contact in an emergency?
- How will you handle challenging behaviour?
- Who is the responsible designated person?
- What is the process if a child goes missing?

Each activity may have identified risks unique to that group and should be detailed on the risk assessment as may not be included in the considerations listed.

Risk assessments for regular or ongoing activities should be reviewed at least annually.

Role check – DBS eligibility for adult activities.

Does the role in question mean that the individual is carrying out one of the six categories of activity (ie health care, personal care, social work, assisting with cash, bills or shopping, assistance with affairs (eg under a lasting power of attorney) or transportation)? If the answer is “no”, then it is not “regulated activity” in relation to adults and there is no eligibility for an enhanced check with barring information in relation to adults.

If not a “regulated activity” in relation to adults, does the role mean that a person on either a frequent, intensive or overnight basis, provides training, teaching, instruction, assistance, advice or guidance to an adult who receives a health or social care service (eg is in a care home or receives any form of care or assistance due to age, illness or disability) or a “specified activity” (eg in prison)? If the answer is “no” – then there will be no eligibility for an enhanced check without barring information in relation to adults.

This list is a guidance but always check with the safeguarding office if a DBS is required for roles in any new parish group activity.

## 13.7 Social Media Guidelines

New technologies offer tremendous opportunities to reach, communicate, evangelise, and engage with those involved in the Catholic Church and those in our communities who may have an interest in the Church. The internet, mobile phones, social networking and other interactive services have transformed the way in which we live.

Along with the many benefits of modern communication technologies, there are risks. The anonymity and sense of distance inherent in online communication can make it easier for people to say things they would perhaps not say in the presence of somebody and to feel less remorseful about online harm caused.

We must avoid the risks of:

- Forming inappropriate relationships.
- Saying things you should not, such as offensive, sexual or suggestive comments.
- Blurring the boundaries between public work / ministry and private life.
- Grooming and impersonation.
- Bullying and harassment.

## 13.8 Church-related Websites and Social Media Pages

Websites or social media profile pages are useful means to engage large groups of young people. The following are recommended guidelines to promote safety online:

- Parish websites and social media profiles should be approved by the parish priest and should be disclosed to the Diocese.
- Where there is user-generated content, the site should be moderated/administered by a minimum of two adults.
- Personal sites should not be used for diocesan or parish programmes; separate sites should be created for these.
- Passwords and names of sites should be registered in an encrypted document in a central location in the parish and Diocese as appropriate. More than one adult should have access to this information.

## Guidance for Church Personnel

Do:

- Have your eyes open and be vigilant.
- Maintain the upmost integrity – honesty, transparency, consistency and accountability are key. Treat online communication with children, young people and adults as you would communication that is face to face. Always maintain the same level of confidentiality.
- Report any safeguarding concerns that arise on social media to the PSR and the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- Always assume that everything you write is permanent and may be viewed by anyone at any time; and that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or the Diocese. Always think before you post.
- Draw clear boundaries around your social media usage associated with your private life and your use of different social media for public ministry. Keep parish account/s and profiles separate from your personal social media account/s; eg only use a Facebook page, Twitter or blogs for public ministry, while keeping a separate Facebook profile for private life.
- Always ask parents/carers for written consent to:
  - Use and store photographs of children / young people from activities or events in official parish publications, or on the parish's social media, website and displays.
  - Use telephone, text message, email and other messaging services to communicate with young people.
  - Allow young people to connect to the parish's social media pages.
- Only use an approved parish/ministry account to communicate with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The named person should be able to access this and review conversations, and the account should be visible to young people and their parents. Young people must be made aware that any communication will be viewed by all users. Save any messages and threads through social networking sites, so that you can provide evidence to the named person of your exchange when required.
- Avoid one-to-one communication with a child or young person.
- Use clear and unambiguous language in all communications and avoid abbreviations that could be misinterpreted.
- Save and download to hard copy any inappropriate material received through social networking sites or other electronic means and show immediately to the named person, PSR, parish priest, and if appropriate the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- Use passwords and log off promptly after use to ensure that nobody else can use social media pretending to be you.



## Guidance for Church Personnel

Do not:

- Use a personal Facebook or any other social media account in your work with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- Add children, young people or vulnerable adults as friends on your personal accounts;
- Facebook stalk (ie dig through people's Facebook pages to find out about them);
- Say anything on social media that you would not be happy saying in a public meeting, to someone's face, writing in a local newspaper or on headed notepaper;
- Comment on photos or posts, or share content, unless appropriate to your parish role;
- Use visual media (eg Zoom, Skype, Facetime) for one-to-one conversations with young people – use only in group settings;
- In particular, do not allow content to contain or share links to other sites that contain:
  - Libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing statements;
  - Breaches of copyright and data protection;
  - Material of an illegal nature;
  - Offensive sexual or abusive references;
  - Inappropriate language.
- Anything which may be harmful to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or which may bring the Church into disrepute or compromise its reputation.

**'CHAT' is a simple code that can be used for remembering some rules around the use of the internet and social media.**

- C** Careful – People online might not always be who they say they are.
- H** Hang – Hang on to your personal information. Never give out your home address or other information.
- A** Arranging – Arranging to meet can be dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure who they are.
- T** Tell – Tell your friends or an adult if you find something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

## 13.9 Choirs and Music Activities

Choirs and music activities involving children and vulnerable adults should be run in accordance with other references in this guidance.

Music lessons for children are normally arranged through a school or as a private arrangement between parent and teacher. However, if the lessons occur on parish premises, for instance using a parish organ, the parish retains responsibility for health and safety in activities carried out on its premises. In these situations the person giving the lesson must complete a confidential declaration form and have a DBS Disclosure if this has not been done already. They should be given a copy of the code of conduct for leaders who work with children and young people and agree to abide by it.

An agreement should be drawn up on parish headed paper, which at least one parent should sign, in which the parent gives consent to the teacher teaching their child at the parish and accepts this will not be supervised. This should include the provision that the parent understands that from time to time it may be necessary for some physical contact between teacher and student as is appropriate in the context of the particular lesson being taught.

This should also be signed by the organist or person giving the lesson and by someone appropriate in the parish (eg the parish priest or PSR). The signed agreement should be retained by the parish.

If a choir is mixed of adult and children all choristers from the age of 16 will require a DBS check.



## 13.10 Home Visiting Adults

Visiting vulnerable adults in their homes is essential to many parish communities. Many parishioners will be well known in the parish, and where there have been no previous concerns the level of risk to the parish visitor or parishioner during visits will usually be low. However, unexpected circumstances can be encountered, some of which may place a parishioner at risk, eg the unexpected presence in the home of a relative or friend with a history of violence or threatening behaviour. Unfortunately, case histories also show that a parishioner may be at risk from a parish visitor. For these reasons it is very important for parishes to ensure their parish visitors and parishioners are as safe as they can be, and that there is accountability and transparency in the manner in which parish priests engage in lone working or visits to homes.

To assure the person you are visiting of their safety, and for your own as a parish visitor:

- Good practice is to undertake a risk assessment before an initial visit, especially if you do not know the person. If any concerns or risks are known before a visit is made, you are always advised to undertake a risk assessment (see the model risk assessment checklist for home visiting, which can be found elsewhere on the diocesan website). In these circumstances, consider whether the visit is necessary, or whether you should be accompanied by another person. In addition, visiting in pairs is advisable and best practice, especially if the adult is perceived to be vulnerable;
- Do not call unannounced; call by appointment if appropriate telephoning the person just before visiting;
- Be clear about what support you can offer and the purpose and limitations of any pastoral care/support that is available;
- Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact, unless there are safeguarding concerns;
- Never offer 'over-the-counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so;
- Do not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If someone wants to make a donation to the parish put it in an envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the parish priest;
- Make a note of the date when you visit people, report back about the visit to the agreed named person and say what is concerning or going well. They will report safeguarding concerns to the PSR and/or parish priest or directly to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding if they are not available;
- It is good practice it to have identification cards for those parishioners who carry out home visits.

## **13.11 Mobile Phones and Email Addresses**

PSRs will be supplied with a mobile phone and an email address dedicated for the PSR role purposes. This means that the phone number / contact email is the only number / email that young people or adults are given, and the PSR's personal telephone number can remain private.

## **13.12 Hiring of Parish Halls**

External groups hiring parish halls must have their own safeguarding policies or undertake to follow the national policies, where their work involves children or adults at risk or who are vulnerable. The parish should have a hiring agreement form which deals with issues such as health and safety, insurance indemnities, and equality. A statement should be added to this agreement requiring, where appropriate, the hiring group to have its own safeguarding policies or to undertake to follow the diocesan safeguarding procedures.

## **13.13 Live Streaming of Parish Services**

The live streaming of Mass and other Services allows the parish to reach a congregation that is not able to attend the church in person. In addition to being able to reach a wider audience than that in a physical location, live streaming can give people support and companionship and help them feel more connected to their parish community. To address potential safeguarding issues, the following steps should be taken:

- Congregations should be told in advance (notice board, announcements, Mass sheets) which Masses / Services are streamed and which parts of the church building are visible on the streaming;
- Children and adults at risk should only be filmed with their consent and / or the consent of parents (for children);
- Parents should be informed in writing of the intention to stream including what will be filmed, why the filming is taking place and how it will be used. This should include any intention to retain a copy of the filming for future editing or use;
- Parents should be given the option of withholding consent to their child participating in parts of a Service where they will be filmed;
- Where consent is withheld, every effort should be made for the child or adult at risk to participate and be out of the view of the cameras.

## 13.14 Photography

If photography or filming is going to take place, people should be told beforehand and given the opportunity to object or simply move out of the picture. This is particularly important if the images are to be used by any media or publication.

It will not be considered fair or lawful if images are collected for one reason and then later are used for something completely unconnected, without going back and gaining consent for the additional use or being able to rely on another processing ground in the GDPR for that additional use.

Issuing a privacy notice is not the same as asking for consent.

## 13.15 Consent to the Use of Images

Consent must be gained from the person. Individuals must be informed that photography or filming is taking place and the specific contexts in which the image will be used, as described above.

If an existing image is to be used for a different purpose than the original intention, the individuals should be notified of its re-use and the purpose for which it is going to be used again.

If an image is to be used on a website or for commercial purposes, this should be explained to the individuals and consent from those in the image must be obtained if they can clearly be identified.

### **Informed Consent**

Consent must be clearly given. Consent is good practice and can be expressed either verbally or in writing but consent in writing is recommended. Written consent is preferable because it reduces the scope for subsequent dispute.

### **Consent for Images of Children and Young People**

Consent for children and young people under the age of 16 must be sought from parents (this includes those with legal responsibility for the child). Young people over 16 years of age are usually considered to be competent to give consent and so consent must be sought from them directly, and if felt to be necessary, also from parents / carers.

### **Consent for Images of Groups / Events**

General images taken of groups, where individuals cannot clearly be identified, do not require organisations to obtain consent from every person featured in the image. However, the fact that such images may or will be taken at any particular event should be made clear to people attending the event beforehand and / or clearly displayed signs.



## 13.16 Use of Private Cars

Parents and volunteers who are driving on behalf of a parish organised event or trip must be made aware that they have a legal responsibility for the safety of children, young people or adults in their cars. Parental agreement must be obtained for their children to be carried in other parents' and volunteers' cars.

The driver is responsible for making sure any passengers wear their seatbelts always throughout the journey.

All efforts should be made to avoid parents and volunteers transporting children being in the position of being alone with them.

Central dropping off points should be considered rather than individual home drops.

If a situation arises where it is unavoidable for an adult to transport a single child, young person or an adult who lacks capacity to consent, the passenger should always travel in the back seat and the event should be reported to the event or group leader and recorded.

If you have a specific role with the parish and have been asked to transport any other person on behalf of the parish then you should ensure you have adequate insurance in place.



# 14. Information Resources and Contacts

## Diocesan Safeguarding Office

**Rachael Campion**, Diocesan Director of Safeguarding  
Telephone number: 0115 953 9849  
Mobile: 07825 648310  
Email: [safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

**Alan Booth**, Safeguarding Officer  
Telephone number: 0115 953 9849  
Mobile: 07821 650295  
Email: [safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

**Jane Black**, Safeguarding Support and Volunteer Coordinator  
Telephone number: 0115 953 9849  
Mobile: 07821 650296  
Email: [safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk)

**Postal Address:** Saint Hugh's House, 1 Castle Quay, Nottingham NG7 1FW

## Police

999 for emergencies  
101 for non-emergencies

## Local Adult and Children's Services

### Derbyshire

01629 533190 (children and adults)  
01629 532600 (out of hours)

### City of Derby

01332 641172 (children urgent referrals)  
01332 786968 (out of hours and non-urgent)  
01332 640777 (adult)  
01332 786968 (out of hours: adult)

### Leicestershire

0116 305 0005 (24 hrs: child)  
0116 305 0004 (adults office hours)  
0116 255 1606 (adult emergency)

### City of Leicester

0116 454 1004 (24hrs children)  
0116 454 1004 (adult office hrs)  
0116 255 1606 (adult emergency)

### Rutland

01572 758 407 (children office hours)  
0116 305 0005 (children emergency)  
01572 758 341 (adults)

### Lincolnshire

01522 782111 (children office hours)  
01522 782155 (adults office hours)  
01522 782333 (emergency: adults and children)

### North Lincolnshire

01724 296500 (children)  
01724 297000 (adults)

### Nottinghamshire

0300 500 8080 (children and adults office hours)  
0300 456 4546 (emergency duty team)

### City of Nottingham

0115 876 4800 (children)  
0300 131 0300 (adults)

## Sources of Support

**Safe Spaces** – a free and independent support service that provides a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England, Church in Wales or the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

- Phone: 0300 303 1056 (answerphone available outside of opening times)
- Email: safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk
- LiveChat: [www.SafeSpacesEnglandandWales.org.uk](http://www.SafeSpacesEnglandandWales.org.uk)
- Website: [www.SafeSpacesEnglandandWales.org.uk](http://www.SafeSpacesEnglandandWales.org.uk)

**The Survivors Trust** – <http://thesurvivorstrust.org>

**Safeline** – [www.safeline.org.uk/what-can-friends-and-family-members-do-to-support-survivors-of-sexual-abuse](http://www.safeline.org.uk/what-can-friends-and-family-members-do-to-support-survivors-of-sexual-abuse)

**Support Line** – [www.supportline.org.uk/problems/rape\\_sexual-assault.php](http://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/rape_sexual-assault.php)

**Victim Support** – [www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/childhood-abuse](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/crime-info/types-crime/childhood-abuse)

**NSPCC** for adults concerned about a child – 0808 800 5000  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

**Childline for children and young people** – 0800 1111

**Action on Elder Abuse helpline** – 0808 808 8141; [www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk)

**24-hour National Domestic Violence helpline** – 0808 2000 247

**NAPAC** offers support and advice to adult survivors of childhood abuse – 0808 8010331

**Stop It Now** helps prevent child sexual abuse – 0808 1000 900

**Cruse bereavement** helpline – 0808 808 1677

**Family Lives** provides support and advice on family issues – 0808 800 222

**MACSAS** for people who have been abused by church officers – 0808 801 0340

**Samaritans** for people struggling to cope and needing someone to talk to – 116 123

**Grief to Grace** – 020 7937 4297 [www.griegtograceuk.org](http://www.griegtograceuk.org)

**Womens Aid** – [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)

**Restored Relationships** – [www.restoredrelationships.org](http://www.restoredrelationships.org)

**Stop it Now** – [www.stopitnow.org.uk](http://www.stopitnow.org.uk)

**Social Care in Excellence** – [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)

**Child Exploitation Online Protection** – [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

**Age UK** – [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

**Barnardos** – [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)

**Spiritual Abuse** – [www.spiritualabuse.com](http://www.spiritualabuse.com)

**Modern Slavery** – [www.modernslavery.co.uk](http://www.modernslavery.co.uk)

**Carers** – <https://carers.org>

**All diocesan safeguarding policy and guidance is listed below:**

- Safer Recruitment Practice and Guidance;
- Training Strategy;
- Managing Allegations and Concerns;
- Communication Plan;
- Victim and Survivor Care Charter;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Safeguarding Complaints policy;
- Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities;
- Domestic Abuse Practice Guidance.

For links to the resources and templates mentioned in this handbook visit: [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/parish-safeguarding-toolkit](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/parish-safeguarding-toolkit)  
Further information on safeguarding in the Catholic Church of England and Wales can be found at the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency website – [www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk)

For a downloadable version of this handbook visit:  
[www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/safeguarding)

# 15. Parish Safeguarding Checklist

To assist with the creation of a safeguarding culture the parish must:

## **Appoint:**

- At least one appropriately experienced designated Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) to support the parish priest. This PSR should be a lay person. The PSR will also be the DBS regulator for the purpose a safer recruitment who work with children or vulnerable adults. The PSR should be supported, trained and given a copy of the parish safeguarding policy and procedures.

## **Safer Recruit, Support and Train:**

- Ensure that all clergy, volunteers and employees who work with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults are recruited following diocesan safer recruitment practice guidance.
- Be aware of and work to the diocesan safeguarding guidance (includes both policies and practice guidance).
- Attend diocesan safeguarding training.
- Have appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the Diocese which involve children and vulnerable adults.

## **Display:**

- A formal statement of safeguarding.
- Contact details of the PSR.
- Contact details for the diocesan safeguarding team – including phone, email and website details.
- Information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, domestic abuse and key helplines eg ChildLine.
- Provide access to a hard copy of the parish safeguarding handbook.
- Provide hardcopy of the diocesan policy practice and guidance.
- (Websites) clearly display safeguarding information.



## Respond:

- Create an environment which is welcoming and respectful and enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently.
- Have a procedure in place to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance and in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations against clergy, volunteers, or employees to the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- To ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and / or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.
- Comply with all data protection legislation especially in regard to storing information about parish personnel, including volunteers, and any safeguarding records.
- Ensure that an “activity risk assessment” is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults, and run in the name of the Church.

## Review and Report Progress:

- The PSR should regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item at each parish pastoral council meeting. Once each year there should be an annual report in relation to safeguarding.
- The PSR and parish priest should meet at least quarterly to discuss safeguarding in the parish.

## Other points to consider:

### Are you working with a Religious Group or organisation?

- If working within other religious groups, ensure jointly you are familiar with each practice guidance, including where to seek advice in urgent situations in line with the practice guidance. This decision should be ratified both by the Bishop and other appropriate leaders in the partnership, and shared with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding; in the event of a specific safeguarding concern always consult with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.

**Irrespective of this choice all abuse cases arising in diocesan settings must be notified to the diocesan safeguarding team.**

### Hire out your parish premises?

- Any hire agreement with any person / body wishing to hire parish premises must contain a provision whereby the person / body hiring the premises agrees to comply with the relevant safeguarding guidance issued by the Diocese of Nottingham, if they do not have their own safeguarding policy.
- The hire agreement should also contain a provision whereby all those hiring parish premises are required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, relevant staff have had appropriate DBS checks and that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring.
- Ensure that all those hiring parish premises carry full public liability insurance for this or are covered through the diocesan insurance (for example hire for a children’s party).





The Catholic Diocese of  
**Nottingham**