

SAFEGUARDING ADVICE AND GUIDANCE



“This in an environment where conflicts, tensions and above all the victims of every type of abuse can encounter an outstretched hand to protect them and rescue them from their pain”¹

Taken from Pope Francis, Letter to the People of God, August 2018

¹<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-08/>

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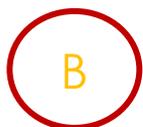
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This booklet uses the symbols below to identify where further information is available and should be read in conjunction with the following;



The Archdiocese of Birmingham
<https://www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk>



Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)
and the National Catholic Safeguarding
Commission (NCSC)
<https://www.csas.uk.net/>
<http://catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>



EduCare <https://www.educare.co.uk/>
For information on how to access online
modules; educare@rc-birmingham.org



National society for the prevention of cruelty
to children (NSPCC)
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding is a responsibility to protect people's health, safety and human rights so they are enabled to live free from abuse, neglect or harm.

Safeguarding means ensuring the safety of others but also the safety of yourself.

Safeguarding means working together to ensure the best possible outcomes for those who could be at risk of harm.

Safeguarding means responding appropriately and proportionately to concerns or referrals and communicating in an open and honest way.

Safeguarding is particularly relevant for

- Children and young people
- Adults at risk
- Ourselves
- Survivors of past abuse

The Catholic Church in England and Wales follow a 'One Church' approach, meaning that they use the same policies, procedures, standards and systems. This ensures that a consistent response and approach to promoting safeguarding is applied.

Each Diocese has a Safeguarding Team who are responsible for the day to day work and a Commission which has oversight of that work.

Religious Orders and Congregations are either aligned to a Diocesan Safeguarding Commission or have their own independent Safeguarding Commission.

The Commission has an independent Chair and representatives from statutory authorities as well as from the Church.

SCOPE

This booklet is intended as a basic guide to safeguarding and aims to offer practical help and support in responding to safeguarding needs in the Archdiocese of Birmingham and in those Religious Orders and Congregations aligned to it.



The policies and procedures which we operate under are those adopted by the Bishops of England and Wales.



For any safeguarding advice or support, you can contact the safeguarding Team at Cathedral House, Monday to Friday between the hours of 9-4. The telephone number is: 0121 230 6240.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

A CHILD IS ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS

DEFINITION FROM THE NSPCC:

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.



Safeguarding means: protecting children from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to children's health or development.²

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 defines abuse as: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child abuse and neglect occurs in a range of situations, for a range of reasons and children are rarely only subject to one form of abuse.

The four main types of abuse are:



- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

Other safeguarding concerns to be aware of include; bullying and cyberbullying, child sexual exploitation, child trafficking, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation and grooming.

²The above definition is taken from; <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>

Children can often be caught up in abuse in their own home or be victims outside the home including within institutions or organisations.

All children need to be cared for and protected and we all have a duty of care to ensure that the safety of children is paramount.

If you are faced with a situation in which a child is in immediate danger contact the Police. If you have a concern that a child might be at risk of harm, please seek advice from the Safeguarding Team on: **0121 230 6240**

HOW WILL I KNOW IF A CHILD IS AT RISK OF HARM?

The signs of child abuse can be hard to spot, the list below is not exhaustive but refers to the common signs that something concerning could be happening in a child's life.

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

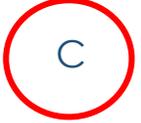
These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused, they could be indicators that something is happening in their lives that they need some help and support with.

Safeguarding concerns about a child who is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm can come to the notice of the Church in different ways:

- It may be that somebody observes a change in a child or there are concerns emerging over a period of time;
- A child might tell a friend or an adult about something that is happening to them or a parent of another child might raise concerns;
- A parent or family member may disclose something that is happening in the home that would impinge on the children's welfare.

Whatever the source of the concerns of allegations, the person receiving the information should observe the following practice:

- Listen to the information and acknowledge what is heard without passing judgement or minimising the information;
- Do not put words into the child's mouth;
- Take into account the child's age and level of understanding, their culture and use of language;
- Do not interrogate the child but be calm and reassuring;
- Do not make promises you cannot keep e.g. not to tell anyone else;

- Explain what you will do next;
- Tell the child who you will need to contact i.e. the Safeguarding Team;
- Do not promise total confidentiality but explain that the information will be treated with great care and, where necessary to safeguard the child or others, the information may be shared appropriately with others who need to know. 
- Make careful notes, as soon as you can and include dates, times of the incident and when the recording was made, who was present and sign the notes. Also make sure the notes are kept securely; 
- Provide the child with some means to contact you and be clear about how and when you will contact them to feed back what will happen next;
- Never leave a child to wait to hear from someone, e.g. a Police officer or social worker, without any idea of timescale or place;
- Do not contact the adult about whom the concerns are being raised to tell them about the information, you could be putting a child or other adult in danger, e.g. where there is domestic abuse taking place, and/or prejudice any form of investigation.

- Where the concerns or allegation are about another adult in a position of trust within the church do not inform the person in question as you might prejudice any Police investigations, always contact the Safeguarding Team at the next available opportunity. 
- It is also possible that you may notice something about a child which causes you concern please seek advice where necessary and only discuss with parents or guardians if doing so will not put the child at risk.

ADULTS WHO WERE ABUSED AS CHILDREN

Child abuse is more common than many people realise and the impact and effects of child abuse can be lifelong. People who have experienced child abuse can need varying levels of support at different stages in their lives. The Safeguarding Team can be contacted by anyone who has been affected by child abuse at any stage in their life.

ABUSE WITHIN THE CHURCH

We are painfully aware that abuse can and has taken place within the Church and by Church personnel. Whilst we strive to make the Church a safe place today individuals can still present a risk and we must be vigilant. The Safeguarding Team is available to talk to anyone concerned about abuse within the Church either today or in the past. Please encourage those with concerns to call us on: **0121 230 6240**

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS WHO MAY HAVE CARE AND SUPPORT NEEDS FROM ABUSE OR NEGLECT IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS.

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

The term "vulnerable adult" has changed to "adult at risk of harm" or "adult at risk".

The Care Act 2014 recognises 10 categories of abuse and neglect for adults;



Physical	Domestic Violence
Sexual	Neglect/Acts of Omission
Psychological	Financial/Material
Self-Neglect & Hoarding	Discriminatory
Modern Slavery	Organisational

If you are concerned about the welfare of an adult seek advice immediately from the Safeguarding Team or if necessary, the appropriate emergency services.

WHO IS AT INCREASED RISK OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

- People dependant on others for assistance, especially with finances and personal care.
- People who lack the capacity³ to consent.
- People who need support with communication.
- People who need support with mobility.
- People who are isolated.
- People receiving care in their own homes.
- People that may experience discrimination (e.g. hate crime).

WHAT TO DO IF YOU RECEIVE A DISCLOSURE



If any person in the Church reasonably suspects or is told that an adult is being, has been or is likely to be abused they must take action.

The view of what constitutes abuse or neglect should not be limited, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered. Exploitation, in particular, is a common theme in many types of abuse and neglect.

Under no circumstances should the alleged abuser be alerted, directly or indirectly, as important evidence may be lost. Formal investigations will be carried out by the police and Adult Social Care Services.

Concerns and allegations relating to an adult can come to the notice of the Church in different ways. If a concern is raised by the adult themselves, the person receiving the information should observe the following practice:



³ Capacity means the ability to use and understand information to make a decision, and communicate any decision made.

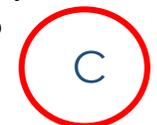
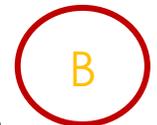
- Listen and acknowledge what is being said without passing judgement or minimising the information;
- Be reassuring and calm;
- Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language and communication skills and disability;
- Do not promise full confidentiality;
- Ask their consent to take up their concerns;
- Explain what you will do next;
- Try to encourage and support them to share their information; If they do not agree consult with your Safeguarding Team;
- Give them your contact details and those of the Safeguarding Team;
- Give them a timescale for when and how you or the Safeguarding Representative will contact them again. Never leave an adult to wait to hear from someone, e.g. a Police officer or social worker, without any idea of timescale or place;
- Do not contact the adult about whom the allegation or concerns are being raised to tell them about the information, you could be putting an adult in danger.



- If the concerns are raised by another person or follow from observations made by a member of the Church, make notes of the information and contact the Safeguarding Team immediately for consultation about what action to take.
- If the information about abuse towards an adult is given by the abuser him or herself to a member of the Church, the person who receives the information must make it clear to the person that the information must be passed to the Safeguarding Team for consultation and further action to be taken. Do not delay in contacting the Safeguarding Team on **0121 230 6240** as the risk may be considerable

CREATING A SAFER CULTURE *"Being loved and kept safe go to the very heart of the Church's ministry to children & vulnerable adults"* (Safeguarding with Confidence - The Cumberlege Commission Report, 2007).

The Catholic Church is committed to creating a safer culture where the safety and well-being of all is a priority. 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 activities facilitated by the Church. In order to ensure that everyone who works with children or adults in vulnerable situations through the Church is suitable, everyone is asked to go through a number of checks. This could include a Disclosure & Barring Service check. This is for the protection of all concerned and it is the policy of the Church. Each Parish has a Safeguarding Representative. They provide the link between the parish and the Safeguarding Team and support the Parish Priest to promote safe practice in all activities involving children and adults and advice on safeguarding matters in the parish.

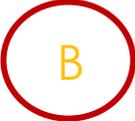


Anyone who has or who wishes to take up a role which means having significant regular contact or taking responsibility for children or vulnerable groups should contact their Parish Safeguarding Representative who will ensure that the necessary forms are completed. The name and contact details for the Parish Safeguarding Representative should be clearly available in the Parish.

Remember that we all have a role in keeping safe those who are at risk of harm in our community, ourselves and those we work or volunteer with. We can create a safer organisation by doing the following:

- Be open and talk about any safeguarding difficulties, especially anything which you feel might make someone or yourself unsafe
- Be clear about how you can behave in a safe way and keep to these boundaries (including activity online/social media)
- Be vigilant and support others to behave safely, talk to them if they are struggling and report if you are concerned
- Deal with things early, know where to get advice and seek this out rather than waiting
- Remember anyone can present a risk and it could be someone you know well and would not think could possibly harm anyone – you don't have to conclude someone is a risk to report a concern, reporting is merely identifying the behaviour and allowing someone else to assess this BUT if you don't report something because you believe from your knowledge of that person that they are not a risk, then your inaction could lead to harm.
- Lastly, safeguarding is about applying sound principles and not ignoring warning signs, be confident and remember that doing the above will create a safer environment where risks will be reduced.

WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

- **The Safeguarding Representative of your Parish** 
- **The Safeguarding Team, who can be contacted on 0121 230 6240**
- **Local policies/ procedures – handbooks, posters, E-learning** 
- **The Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS) – Coordination, advice, policies, procedures and support- accessed through their website <https://www.csas.uk.net/> and on 0207 901 1920**
- **The National Catholic Safeguarding Commission- online; <http://catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>** 

Taken from Pope Francis, Letter to the People of God- August 2018

“Without the active participation of all the Church's members, everything being done to uproot the culture of abuse in our communities will not be successful in generating the necessary dynamics for sound and realistic change”⁴

⁴ <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-08/pope-francis-letter-people-of-god-sexual-abuse.html>