



Westminster Safeguarding Service

Diocese of Westminster - Commitment to Survivors – March 2020

Introduction:

This commitment is to be read in conjunction with the Survivor Advisory Panel information sheet 'How to respond, listen to and support victims and survivors of abuse' and the CSAS Leaflet 'Hurt by Abuse'

The Diocese of Westminster's commitments are:

- We are committed to helping and supporting the Survivor through the process of reporting their experience
- Deciding how and why to speak out is a personal matter, whatever the reasons we want Survivors to be heard, taken seriously and be supported.
- As soon as a Survivor makes contact with the Safeguarding Service they will be offered a conversation at a time, place / medium to suit them e.g. face to face, telephone, skype
- The Survivor will be informed that all allegations of abuse will be reported to the Statutory authorities
- An initial letter will be sent to the Survivor explaining what they can expect of the Safeguarding team, accompanied by the CSAS leaflets.
- If the Survivor is raising concern about a Religious Order, the Survivor will be informed as to the nature of the relationship between the Religious Order and the Diocese in order for roles and responsibilities to be clear.



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- A discussion will be had with the Survivor about what information about them will be shared and with whom, as well as what information may be shared with them during the course of the safeguarding process. It should be noted that the Diocese has obligations under data protection legislation to other individuals involved in the safeguarding process. It also has a responsibility to share information with Statutory agencies, with diocesan insurers and legal advisers, and with the Charity Commission. These obligations and responsibilities will be fully explained to the Survivor.
- The Diocese will consider independent funding for counselling on an individual, case by case basis.
- The issue of ongoing contact with the Survivor at the conclusion of an investigation and assessment will be considered with the Survivor prior to the closing of the case
- As part of their ongoing casework oversight, reports to the Safeguarding Commission will include details of the support offered to individual survivors
- Survivors will be invited to comment on the support they have received from the safeguarding service at the conclusion of their involvement. This information will be used to inform future improvements in practice.
- The Survivor will be informed of the Complaints procedure should they be dissatisfied with any element of the service they receive
- Any issues raised by the Survivor in respect of concerns about national policies will be raised with CSAS on their behalf.
- The survivors' perspective on their involvement with the Diocese will form part of the annual safeguarding report to the Board of Trustees.