



Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster Safeguarding service update



Autum/Winter 2022

Foreword by Geraldine Allen

Safeguarding coordinator for the diocese of Westminster

Recently, Professor Alexis Jay OBE published the full report of the Independent Inquiry into Child sexual abuse. The Catholic church Bishops Conference of England and Wales thanked the inquiry for its work and reiterated the churches commitment to 'listening with humility' to those who have been hurt by the actions of church member. A reminder for us all of the importances of being a listening service, as well as ensuring we take action to report all allegations and concerns.

Kind Regards,
Geraldine Allen

Mgr Seamus O'Boyle- Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding

Recent months have seen us living through a bewildering amount of change in our country. The total disarray of the Government with the coming and going of Prime Ministers and their Cabinets has done more than affect the financial markets – it has caused a very deep-rooted sense of unease in people. Professor Alexis Jay and her panel of colleagues who have worked so hard for seven years on the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) must have been particularly dismayed that the timing of the publication of the IICSA Report coincided exactly with the departure of the then Prime Minister Liz Truss. A huge piece of work so vital to the protection of future generations of children was mentioned only in passing in the News on Thursday 20th October. If you have not read the Report – it is a long and detailed document - at least have a look at the Executive Summary. As a Church we do come in for criticism – and quite rightly. But we are more than willing to learn from the tragic failings of the past to try our utmost to make sure that such pain and suffering is never inflicted on the innocent again.

Our Bishops are committed to implementing change, and the new National Safeguarding structures – CSSA and RLSS - should help achieve that change at every level of the Church's mission. Thank you for your willingness to help transform safeguarding in the Church at the Parish level, your role is vital.

Inside this Issue

1. Foreword by GA/ Mgr S.O.
2. Areas of PSR work
3. Reclaiming stolen lives
4. Safer Recruitment DBS
5. Safer Recruitment DBS
6. Online safety and social media
7. CSSA Standards
8. Creating a Safe environment
9. Safeguarding news: IICSA report
10. Frequently Asked Questions
11. Contact Details
12. Greetings



4 AREAS of PSR's WORK



These are:

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS/ALLEGATIONS

PSRs are the first point of contact for the parish community should anyone wish to disclose a safeguarding concern. The PSRs are responsible to check their dedicated SG email address on a regular basis and at least once a week. Should PSRs become aware of any concern they have to pass this on to the central safeguarding team within the first 24 hours of learning about the concern. The email address can also be set up on the PSR's mobile phone as long as this is secured with safety access codes at all times to enhance third parties' data protection.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

The process of safely recruiting anyone who wishes to work/volunteer in the parishes with groups of children and/or adults at risk, includes the initial processing of DBS applications including ID verification, interviews, and reference requests for example.

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

An incredibly important part of a PSR's work to be carried out with the collaboration of parish priests, activity group leaders, parish admins and any volunteer in contact with vulnerable groups. It is about implementing safeguarding policies and procedures whenever a parish activity, especially for children and/or adults at risk, takes place. CSSA

(Catholic Safeguarding Standard Agency) is the web site to visit and the guidance "Creating a safer environment" should be a central piece of this work with which every person working/volunteering at the parish should be familiar with. This includes use of social media, photographing and videoing, off-site trips, bullying and more. It can be found at

<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/practice-guidance/>

ADVANCING A "CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING"

This part of the work aims at educating the parish communities with a basic understanding of safeguarding to keep everybody safe from harm and abuse. PSRs should encourage the community to enroll in safeguarding EduCare Online modules by contacting at safeguardingadmin@rcdow.org.uk to be registered and start/complete these safeguarding courses. Also safeguarding literature should be regularly distributed in the parish. This ranges from leaflets to support survivors of abuse with free counselling service (SAFE SPACES) to recognise and responding to abuse (HURT BY ABUSE) and local services available for couple domestic abuse services. A "safeguarding corner" in the parishes consisting of a small table, rotating stands and/or a wall plastic bag to keep the literature would be ideal. All safeguarding literature can also be downloaded from each diocesan parish micro website (About/Safeguarding).



In partnership with Survivor Voices and Scottish Laity Network,
Root & Branch present our second series of events

Reclaiming Stolen Lives



FR HANS ZOLLNER SJ

Hans Zollner, SJ, is a theologian, psychologist and psychotherapist. He is Ordinary Professor and Director of the Institute of Anthropology Interdisciplinary Studies on Human Dignity and Care (IADC) at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He has been a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors since its inception in 2014.

[Click here to Register >>>](#)

Wed 16 Nov, 20.00 GMT



ANTONIA SOBOCKI

LOUDFence - is a visible display of support and solidarity with those affected by abuse.



Antonia is a wife, mother of three. Carer for her disabled son and elderly mother, and a Roman Catholic Activist who wants the church to be the safe caring church she always thought it was.

[Click here to Register >>>](#)

"If the church had treated me as the casualty and not as the problem I would not have had to fight for justice, I would have been supported and I would not have had to sacrifice 27 years of my life. It would have made all the difference in the world!" - Anonymous Survivor

root & branch



in our Catholic church!



SAFE RECRUITMENT: Including DBS

DBS Update Service Guidance

DBS processed through another Organisation:

If an applicant informs you that they have an existing certificate which has been registered for the update service, you first need to check if the workforce is applicable to the Church role applied for, and if it is at the correct level i.e. Enhanced with access to the relevant Barred List(s)

If this matches, then the Diocese will accept the existing certificate – the original document should be sent to the Safeguarding Office along with the following as normal:

[Applicant Consent For DBS Processing \(DBS 17\) Volunteer](#)

[Registration Form](#)

[Volunteer Reference Form](#)

[Confirmation of ID \(DBS3a\) or Confirmation of ID](#)

[\(DBS3b\) Safeguarding Self Declaration \(DBS 4\)](#)



Common 'hold ups' to applications

Hold up	Troubleshooting
Apostrophe, accents, hyphens, spelling errors.	Ensure that the completed forms and ID each match the name listed.
Non UK Marriage Certificate	*This can be used as a 4 th form of ID (in case of name change) but can not be used as 1 of the 3 forms of ID. Example: Irish marriage certificate
ID Documents not being legible or fully visible	After copying documents check all information is readable. Use the guidelines for 3a and 3b for the correct documents.
Application does not match the role applied for	If there are multiple roles, check with the team before selecting. The DBS team will need to send the application back to the PSR, applicant for amendment.
Non-eligible referees	Parish Priest, Deacon, members of your diocesan safeguarding team or family members cannot be used as referees.

SAFE RECRUITMENT: INCLUDING DBS

Safer recruitment of new volunteers – working with children or adults at risk



Post-Appointment



Online Safety and Social media- Creating a safe environment

There are lots of benefits for children and young people when using social media. This includes staying connected with friends and family, enabling innovative ways of learning and creating new ways for them to express themselves.

If you work with children and young people you should have online safety policies and procedures. Think about whether your organisation needs to use social media to engage with or contact children and young people. If you do, you should consider how to make sure this is done safely and appropriately. Set out the behavioral standards you expect from adults working or volunteering online with children, and from the children and young people themselves.

Your code of conduct for adults should remind them to always:

- Use accounts that have been authorised by your organisation to communicate with children and young people (never use personal accounts)
- Turn on privacy settings on accounts that are used to interact with children and young people
- Use an organisational device to communicate with young people (if this isn't possible, senior managers should authorise individual staff and volunteers to use a personal device on a case-by-case basis and keep a record of this authorisation and who can see the communication)
- Ensure all communications are relevant to the work of the project and organisation
- use age-appropriate language.

Staff and volunteers should also be aware of their digital footprint. Children, young people and families may look up the personal social media accounts of people who are working with them so these should be free of inappropriate or harmful content and not provide any personal information such as personal email addresses or phone numbers.

It's best practice for staff and volunteers not to accept friend requests on their personal accounts from children and families they work with.



https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/social-media-and-online-safety?utm_source=Adestra&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Social%20media%20and%20online%20safety&utm_campaign=20221017_KIS_CASPAR_October17



Catholic Standards Safeguarding Agency (CSSA) Safeguarding Standards



There are 8 standards which require church bodies to:

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

The standards operate as a coherent whole, which together form an overarching framework within which all church bodies are expected to operate. They represent the expected level of practice that is to be applied by church bodies for the purpose of safeguarding the children and adults with whom the Church has contact. The Safeguarding Service are committed to ensure the work they deliver reaches the required standards. More details can be found on the CSSA website.

CSSA Audit: The Diocese continue to prepare for the CSSA Audit in which we will be evaluated against the Standards as described above. We will continue to discuss how you can best prepare for this during the Deanery Meetings. If you would wish to discuss this with me, please email me.

Staff News: Arianna Sommariva has now ended her time working with the Diocese. I would wish to thank her for all the work she has undertaken in supporting PSR's and Parishes'

Creating a Safe Environment

The Safeguarding Team continue to review the open/historic cases and identify learning from these. One case recently reviewed involved a young man who arrived from another country with what appeared to be a testimonial of suitability from his local Bishop. He was allowed to undertake a role within the Parish, including working with children. Subsequent allegations of sexual assault were made by girls against him.

When a check was finally made with the Bishop, he confirmed that he had not provided a testimonial of suitability, but rather a letter so that the man could access some financial assistance.

The case highlighted the need to ensure that all visiting volunteers, possible trainee Priests, are checked as per any other volunteer, and that Priests provide a valid Celebret or Testimonial of Suitability.

Visiting Priests and Deacons:

If your parish has a priest, ensure that you have seen their Celebret or testimonial of suitability . This will verify that he is a priest of good standing

Access to Parish Computer/ IT systems:

You may regularly have the assistance of Parishioners to maintain or update the parish computer. Please ensure that they use an access ID and password that is also known to the parish priest and parish administrator. This will ensure the oversight of the work they undertake. Also ensure that the volunteer signs a confidentiality statement.

Visitors/ Tenants in the Presbytery:

Please ensure that any long term visitors sign a tenancy agreement. See CSSA procedures 'Creating a safe environment' for future tenants.

IICSA REPORT

The Final Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was published on 20.10.2022.

https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/31216/view/report-independent-inquiry-into-child-sexual-abuse-october-2022_0.pdf

The report covers England and Wales and sets out 20 key recommendations that have been made to the Government:

1. A single set of core data relating to child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation.
2. Child Protection Authorities for England and for Wales.
3. A cabinet-level Minister for Children.
4. A public awareness campaign to raise awareness of child sexual abuse
5. Prohibiting the use of pain compliance techniques.
6. The amendment of the Children Act 1989.
7. Registration of care staff in children's homes.
8. Registration of staff in care roles in young offender institutions and secure training centers.
9. Greater use of the Disclosure and Barring Service barred list.
10. Improvements to compliance with statutory duties to refer concerns to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
11. Extending the disclosure regime to those working with children overseas.
12. Pre-screening for illegal images of children.
13. Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse in certain circumstances.
14. Compliance with the Victims' Code.
15. The removal of the three-year limitation period for personal injury claims brought by victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.
16. A national guarantee of specialist therapeutic support for child victims.
17. A code of practice on access to records about child sexual abuse.
18. Further changes to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.
19. A tiered redress scheme.
20. Age verification in relation to Online services and social media platforms.

The Roman Catholic Church was one of the Faith organisations that the IICSA process focused on. The specific report in relation to the Roman Catholic Church can be found here

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/reports-recommendations/publications/investigation/roman-catholic-church>

Frequently asked questions

Questions:

Q: Do volunteers have to complete online training?

Q: What are the children/adults ratios for parish activities?

Q: Can 15 years old volunteer in the parish and if so, what actions do we have to take to ensure this is done safely?

Q: Can we create a parish activity with a group of 16-25 years old?

For any additional clarification please write to:

Answers:

A: Encouraging virtually all volunteers to complete Online safeguarding courses (EduCare) is helpful to promote the 'Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility' message which is very important to equip everyone about understanding how to recognise and responding to concerns and create a safe environment that aim at keeping everyone safe from harm and abuse both in and out of church environment. We highly recommend that especially volunteers who work in close contact with groups of vulnerable like children, young people and/or at risk complete the 'Child Protection' and safeguarding Adults' ones.

A: Please refer to the 'Creating a safe environment' guidance, Chapter 3, page 8.

<http://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/practice-guidance/>

(Creating a safe environment)

A: Children and young adults are often encouraged by their parents and parish community to volunteer. This is a very positive thing however, before the volunteering starts, please ensure that you have obtained parental written consent where it is outlined about what/when/where/for how long the volunteering is going to happen, who the (couple) appropriately safely recruited adult supervisors will be and please do obtain signed/dated code of conducts from both the young people and the adults and keep this on record for the duration of the volunteering period.

A: No, we strongly recommend you do not mix groups of children (anyone below the age of 18) with adults because there may be potential risks associated with this. Please do contact us at any time by calling 02077 989358 or emailing safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk for more advice.

safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

CONTACT DETAILS

The Central Safeguarding Team

Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding:

Name: Rev Monsignor Séamus O'Boyle
Email: seamusoboyle@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 020 7226 3277

Safeguarding Coordinator:

Name: Geraldine Allen
Email: geraldineallen@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 020 7798 9350 / 07803 634 236
Phone: 020 7798 9359 / 07889 805 284

Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator:

Name: Monawara Bakht
Email: monawarabakht@rcdow.org.uk

Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Frederick Coombs
Email: frederickcoombs@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 020 7798 9186 / 07851 250 897

Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Eithne Atterbury
Email: eithneatterbury@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 07851 250899

Safeguarding Officer (Review):

Name: Lydia Bowles
Email: lydiabowles@rcdow.org.uk

Safeguarding Office Manager:

Name: Rika Pfaff
Email: rikapfaff@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 07936935707

Safeguarding Team Administrator:

Name: Stephanie Uwalaka
Email: stephanieuwalaka@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 07394 560926

Senior DBS Administrator:

Name: Veronica Officer
Email: veronicaofficer@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 020 7798 9352 / 07803 634 239

DBS Administrator:

Name: Alex Dance
Email: alexanderdance@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 07874 878712

DBS Administrator:

Name: Johanna Ashley
Email: johannaashley@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 07874 861 060

Parish Safeguarding Support Officer:

Name: Maria Eid

Other Contacts

Catholic Safeguarding Standard Agency (CSSA)

Email: admin@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk
Phone: 020 7901 1920
Website: <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

Report any safeguarding concerns, past or present:

Email: safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

For EduCare Online training support and all other queries:

Email: safeguardingadmin@rcdow.org.uk

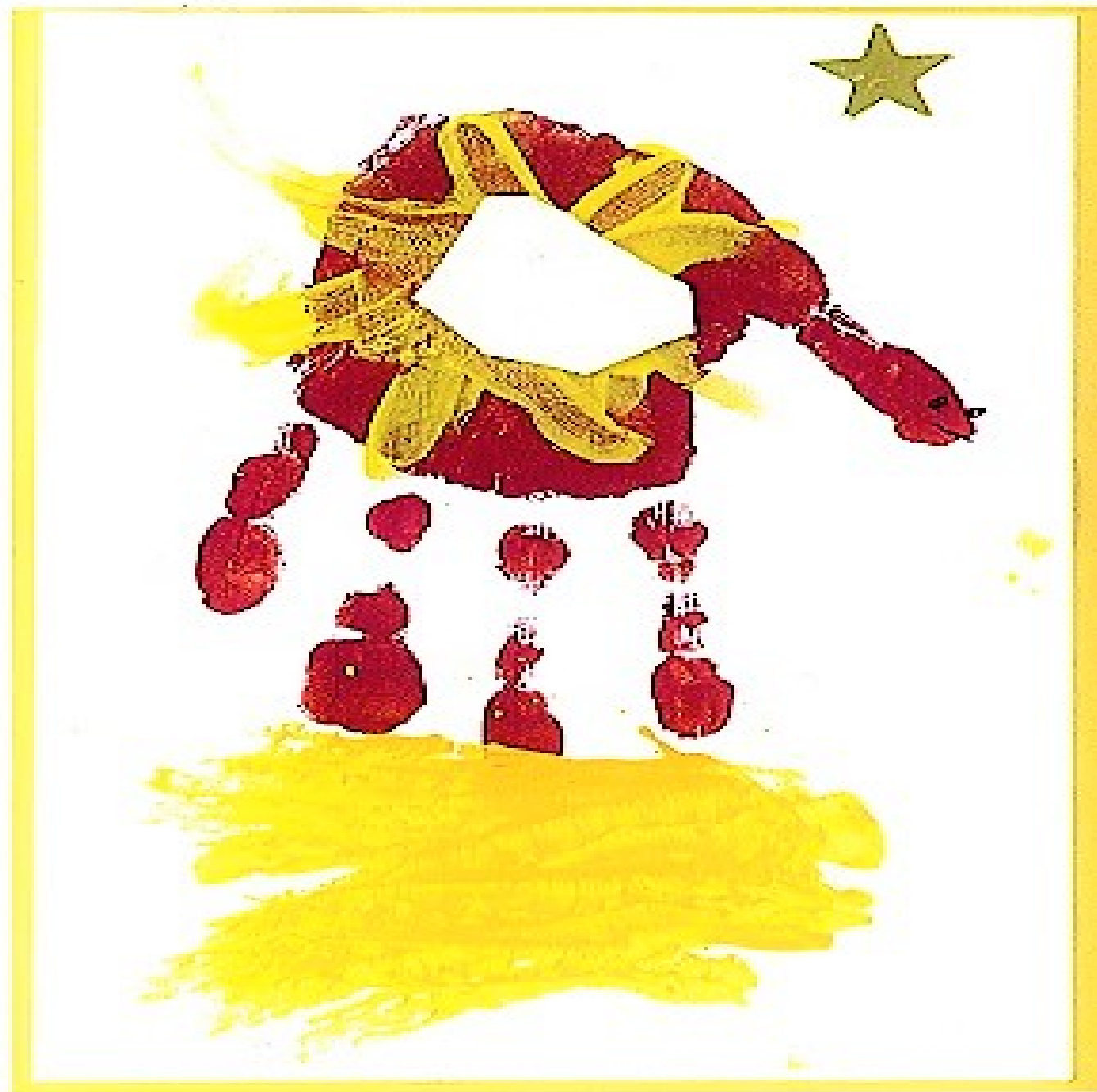
For Safer Recruitment & DBS Queries:

Email: dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk
Phone: 020 7798 9352

For PSR Support & Creating a Safe Environment

Queries: Email: safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

Wishing that the Autumn season bring joy and happiness.



Images in this newsletter kindly provided by children and young people of RCDOW parishes. THANK YOU to them all and the adults who helped in organising and delivering this lovely parish communities project.