



# RCDOW Safeguarding Service Newsletter

Autumn 2023

## *Forward by Geraldine Allen* *RCDOW Safeguarding Co-ordinator*

Dear PSRs,

I hope that you find the information in this newsletter helpful. The safeguarding service is working to make the information relevant and easily accessible. Should you have any feedback on how we can improve please let us know.

We are setting up PSR Refresher training for 2024 – please sign up for a date that is convenient to you. We can continue to keep you up to date with changes from the CSSA and improvements in safeguarding practices.

Many thanks, Geraldine

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## **Important Information for Visiting Priests**

A reminder of Mgr Martin Haye's communication sent earlier this year regarding visiting priests:

It is the responsibility of Parish Priests and Lead Chaplains to ensure that visiting and supply priests have a **valid Celebret** if incardinated in England and Wales or a **valid Testimonial of Suitability for Ministry** from their Bishop or Religious Superior if they are not incardinated in England and Wales. Forms to be used by Parish Priests and Lead Chaplains can be requested from the Vicar General's office. If there are any issues about the credentials of a visiting or supply priest please contact the Vicar General.

If the visiting priest's stay is extended, please contact the Safeguarding Office to ensure all relevant training and DBS requirements are met.

Ensure your visiting priest has an induction into parish life and knows where to find the information on safeguarding in your Parish and the Diocese.

## **PSR Contact Details**

**Have you changed your mobile number? Do you still use the email address you previously provided?**

**Make sure your details are up to date with the Safeguarding Service**  
**Click this link to update us:**

<https://forms.office.com/e/aCbEwdx8p9>

## **Website and PSR Poster Reminders:**

- Check that the information on your parish website has the correct contact details for the Diocesan Safeguarding Service. Our contact page is found here: [Contact Us - Diocese of Westminster \(rcdow.org.uk\)](https://www.rcdow.org.uk)
- If you run your own website contact your provider to update the information.
- Make sure safeguarding posters are displayed throughout the parish. Ensure they are up to date and do not contain personal contact information. i.e. only @rcdow email addresses should be displayed on posters; [click here](#)

## **Planning offsite visits or trips for your parish**

Information on safeguarding considerations for offsite visits or trips can be found from pages 17-21 of the CSSA Creating a safer environment guidance, available [here](#).

In addition, the following CSSA guidance may also be helpful in planning events dependent on the type of event being held:

- [Overnight accommodation Guidance](#)



## Updating your Parish Safeguarding Display

The Safeguarding Support team has been working on resources to assist you with creating a culture of safeguarding in your parish.

Take a look at the new posters available in the Parish Safeguarding Poster & Safeguarding information corner, on our [PSR page](#).

Below is a handy checklist to ensure you have all the information needed:



*Updated PSR posters which include space for 1-3 PSRs.*

*The new poster includes the option to include a poster.*



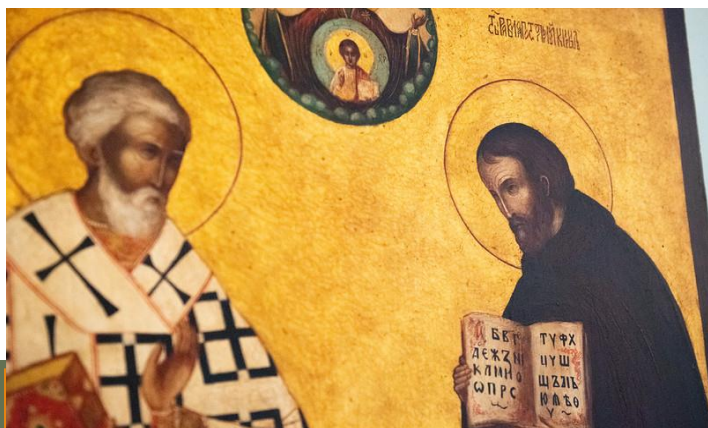
*Local Services Poster – an adaptable poster to list the local safeguarding services to your church*



*National helplines and websites – Lists organisations and contact details to support the wider offer of safeguarding support to your parish.*



*Department for education posters and guidance on keeping children safe in activities.*



## Parish Audit in 5 steps:

To help prepare your parish for audit, please follow these 5 steps with your parish priest:

- 1) Request a Parish Report to track the recruitment of your volunteers by emailing [dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk) to receive a copy
- 2) Ensure your parish is following the 8 CSSA Safeguarding Standards, please [click here](#) to see the Standards on the CSSA website. And read the CSSA guidance on preparation for Parish audit, please [click here](#)
- 3) Use this Safer Recruitment Tracker checklists to ensure each stage of the safer recruitment process has been completed: [Parish Safer Recruitment Checklist](#) & [PSR Safer Recruitment Checklist](#)
- 4) Complete this checklist of tasks, with this [Parish Self-Evaluation Tool](#)
- 5) For more information on the Parish Audit process, please see this document on the [Diocesan Internal Audit Programme](#).

One of the CSSA functions is to be a regulator, undertaking audits of all Diocese and Religious Orders. Having signed the contract with the CSSA, we have now been notified that they are auditing the Diocese in **January 2024**. They will be evaluating the Diocese against the 8 Standards and the process they followed is laid out in the Quality Assurance section of their website. As part of the process, they will be sending out a questionnaire to PSR's and Parish Priests – we encourage you to complete this please. Secondly they will randomly select a group of PSR's to attend a focus group in January 2024; we will notify you as to who has been selected.

**This is our opportunity to celebrate the work that is being done in the Parishes and also to identify what further work is to be undertaken, as we are committed to continuous improvement.**

# New Training Dates for 2024!

Training	Day/Date	Venue
PSR Induction	Tuesday 30 January 10:00-15:30	Vaughan House
PSR Induction	Saturday 9 March 10:00-15:30	Vaughan House
PSR Induction	Tuesday 14 May 10:00-15:30	Vaughan House
PSR Induction	Saturday 13 July 10:00-15:30	Vaughan House
PSR Induction	Tuesday 17 September 10:00-15:30	Vaughan House
PSR Induction	Saturday 9 November 10:00-15:30	Vaughan House

Training	Day/Date	Venue
PSR Refresher	Saturday 03 February 10:00-12:00	Vaughan House
PSR Refresher	Thursday 20 June 18:30-20:30	Online
PSR Refresher	Tuesday 8 October 10:00-12:00	Vaughan House

Training	Day/Date	Venue
PSR Conference	TBC –Week commencing 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	TBC

To register for refresher training please complete the online registration form: <https://forms.office.com/e/B9Dw4WnVwE>

## National Safeguarding Updates

### The Department for Education...

...has just published its updated guidance for safeguarding in out-of-school settings, which includes supplementary religious settings. Code of practice: [Keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice](#)

### NSPCC...

...has updated its guidance for safeguarding children when they are dropped off and picked up from school. The guidance sets out information on helping keep children safe before and after school and has been updated to reflect the latest guidance and legislation.

Read the guidance: [Dropping off and picking up before and after school](#)

## PSR Email Signature and Out of Office Guidance

Please see the sample signature template below and Microsoft Office 365 guidance. Please note the safeguarding email is specifically for the role of Parish Safeguarding Representatives and is the email address advertised as a point of contact for referring safeguarding concerns.

### Sample signature:

Forename Surname | Parish Safeguarding Representative

Church Name, Parish Name

Parish Address including postcode

Email: parishsg@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

*If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child or adult at risk, please telephone the police on 999. Alternatively, you can also make contact with the Police on 101 or your local children or adult services via your local Council website.*

**Some PSRs include the following information that you may like to add to your signature or send as an automatic reply:**

*This email is checked periodically during the week. The general email for the parish, if you need to make contact with the Parish Priest or the parish office is XXXX@rcdow.org.uk or phone 020 xxxx xxxx*

**Microsoft Support:** How to set up your signature: [Create an email signature - Microsoft Support](#)

How to set up your out of office: [Send automatic out of office replies from Outlook for Windows - Microsoft Support](#)



## ***Diocese of Westminster Policy on Social Media and Communication in the Public Sphere***

### **4.1 Use of the internet and social media**

As use of the internet and, particularly social media, proliferate and more individuals create their own content, it is appropriate to formulate a policy regarding the use by diocesan personnel of all media, both online and offline, written, spoken, and images (photos, film, graphics). In this document, 'diocesan personnel' includes diocesan employees, department heads, heads of programmes, those who hold positions of responsibility, contractors, consultants, **and those who provide ministry or service for the diocese on a voluntary basis**

### **4.2 Definitions:**

- Digital media include all forms of online media that can be accessed by a wide audience from anywhere. They include but are not limited to such sites as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Issuu, Flickr, Vimeo, Youtube, and Instagram, for instance. They also include websites, messaging boards, discussion forums, and blogs. In other words, any form of online media and communication that can be accessed by the public is included in this definition.
- Written articles, video and audio recordings, photographs and other illustrations can be transferred online to social media sites and/or websites, at which point the definition of digital media applies to these communications.
- The internet is essentially a public sphere, even if social media sites might give the impression of a degree of privacy. Diocesan personnel are advised to remember that control of images and text is lost once a post is made. This may mean that, even if you delete a social media post, it can still be seen in future in certain circumstances, for example, if it is reposted by someone else, shared or published.

### **4.3 Our Individual Responsibility:**

Diocesan personnel are advised to reflect carefully on Pope Francis' guidance on the use of social media. In particular, the Holy Father has noted: 'The speed with which information is communicated exceeds our capacity for reflection and judgment, and this does not make for more balanced and proper forms of expression. ... We need, for example, to recover a certain sense of deliberateness and calm. This calls for time and the ability to be silent and to listen.'

Diocesan personnel who are Catholics are reminded of their canonical responsibility

- to recognise the integrity of the Church's teaching on faith and morals,
- to respect the dignity of persons,
- to acknowledge the special role of their pastors in faith and
- to promote the common good of the Church applies always and everywhere including on personal media and internet sites.

Diocesan personnel must abide at all times by the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSSA) Policy and procedures. CSSA Guidelines regarding Social Networking with Children, Young People and vulnerable adults are to be observed by all diocesan employees and those who provide ministry or service for the diocese on a voluntary basis.

### **4.4 Use of social media in an Official Capacity:**

**Use of the internet and social media in your official role should be treated in exactly the same way as any interaction with the mass media. In other words, treat all content as you would a press release or a public statement, taking particular care to refrain from posting:**

- confidential information (personnel are reminded that they have signed a confidentiality agreement as part of their employment contract),
- anything which breaches Data Protection regulations,
- any intellectual property or copyright material without express permission of the owner,
- derogatory or hostile responses to others' posts,
- anything which could bring the diocese into disrepute.
- Anything which is broadcast or published in your diocesan capacity must be accessible to the Diocesan Communications Office and the individual's line manager



#### 4.5 Personal Views in the Context of the Church and Diocese:

The diocese respects the right of diocesan personnel to express views on their personal social media accounts or via other media channels. However, online activity which negatively impacts on an individual's ability to carry out their role in the diocese or which could bring the diocese into disrepute may result in their being required to cease voluntary ministry or service and/or in a serious case involving a paid employee, may lead to disciplinary action in line with the diocesan disciplinary policy and procedure. Breach of diocesan or CSSA policy on safeguarding, bullying and harassment could lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Diocesan personnel who proffer opinions on any topics related to Church teaching on their personal media should specifically state that their views are entirely their own. Personal accounts and sites may not carry diocesan logos and diocesan job titles may not be used as primary headings or in profile descriptions on personal sites, an exception being accounts on professional networking sites, such as LinkedIn. Moreover, it is recognised that professionals may need to have a presence in the media; however, great care must be exercised in any publications or post. Where, in the judgement of the Archbishop or his delegate, the content of a personal social media account or site is deemed to be in danger of causing reputational damage to the Church or the diocese, the individual may be required to remove any indication of their diocesan connection on their personal social media and may be requested to remove the content.

Diocesan personnel are asked to remember the security climate at this time, and avoid posting any images, video or information which could compromise the safety or security of diocesan personnel or any part of a parish or other diocesan building, the cathedral and cathedral complex. Please be especially mindful of not recording or publishing any video footage that might compromise security entry codes or safe combinations.

#### 4.6 Monitoring and Access:

In line with other diocesan policies, the diocese actively monitors social media and internet activity and reserves the right to monitor employees' internet usage. The diocese may access email files and folders and line managers have the right to access diocesan email accounts and business communications of their staff for business purposes. Staff may be asked to access diocesan email accounts and business communication of colleagues for business purposes. Access to particular social media websites may be withdrawn in any case of misuse.

If you have any questions or would like guidance with regard to the use of social media, please contact the Diocesan Communications Officer: [communications@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:communications@rcdow.org.uk), 020 7798 9031.

*Further information to help you:*

**CSSA, Practice Guidance:  
Creating a Safer Environment,  
Section 8: Safe use of technology 24-30**  
[click here](#)

**DFE, Keeping Children safe in  
Education, Section 8: Safe use of  
technology 24-30** [click here](#)



# Diocese of Westminster Safeguarding Service

The Safeguarding service is managed by the

**Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding:**

*Rev Mgr Séamus O'Boyle:* [seamusoboyle@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:seamusoboyle@rcdow.org.uk)

**Safeguarding Co-ordinator for the Diocese:**

*Geraldine Allen;* [geraldineallen@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:geraldineallen@rcdow.org.uk)

**Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator:**

*Monawara Bakht:* [monawarabakht@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:monawarabakht@rcdow.org.uk)



## Reporting Safeguarding Concerns:

[safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk)

**Safeguarding Officer:**

*Freddie Coombs*

020 7798 9186 / 07851 250 897

**Safeguarding Officer:**

*Eithne Atterbury*

020 7798 9096 / 07851 250 899

**Safeguarding Officer - Historic cases**

**review:** *Lydia Bowles*

[lydiabowles@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:lydiabowles@rcdow.org.uk)



## Safer Recruitment including DBS:

Queries: [dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk)

Submissions:

[dbssubmissions@safeguardrcdow.org.uk](mailto:dbssubmissions@safeguardrcdow.org.uk)

020 7798 9352

**Senior DBS Administrator:**

*Fiona Giscombe*

07874 878 710

**DBS Administrator:**

*Esme Bowles*

020 7798 2350

**DBS Administrator:**

*Johanna Ashley*

07874 861 060

(Working days: Tue, Wed and Fri)



## Safer Environment & PSR queries:

[safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk)

**Senior Parish Safeguarding Support**

**Learning & Development Officer:**

*Veronica Officer*

07803 634 239



## EduCare online training support and all other queries:

[safeguardingadmin@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingadmin@rcdow.org.uk)

**Safeguarding Team Administrator:**

*Stephanie Uwalaka-Seck*

020 7798 9356 / 07394 560 926



You can find up to date contact information on the Diocese of Westminster's website:

<https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/contact-us/>

**Reporting Concerns:**

[www.rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/reporting-a-concern-about-a-child-or-adult-at-risk/](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/reporting-a-concern-about-a-child-or-adult-at-risk/)

**Safer Recruitment:**

[www.rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment-and-dbs-applications/](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safer-recruitment-and-dbs-applications/)

**Safer environment:**

[www.rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/creating-a-safe-environment/](http://www.rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/creating-a-safe-environment/)

**If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, do not delay in contacting the police, using 999 if a child or adult is believed to be in immediate danger.**

It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report all allegations of abuse to statutory authorities, regardless of whether the abuse occurred recently or in the past, or whether the accused person is living or deceased.

If you are in any role within the Catholic Church in England and Wales, you must refer allegations directly to the Diocese of Westminster or religious congregation, or directly to the police.

