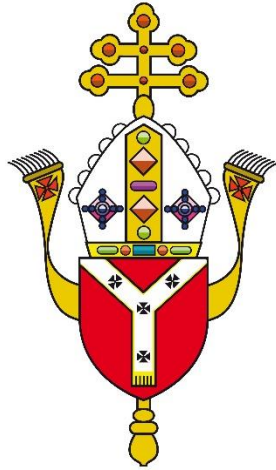


DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy prepared by:	Head of Safeguarding
Third Party Policy:	No
Approval of the Safeguarding Committee	3 July 2025
Approval of The Directors of the Trustee	11 July 2025
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Diocese of Westminster Safeguarding Policy

1. This policy should be read in conjunction with Diocesan Procedures and Guidance
2. Any abuse of children and/or adults at risk¹ under the supervision or care of clergy, religious, Church volunteers, employees or persons involved in Church activities will not be tolerated. Such behaviour is contrary to the Gospel and to the Church's mission, stated values and ideals, which require that everyone must be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.
3. 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. The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) has been responsible for the policies throughout the Catholic Church in England and Wales.
4. The Diocese of Westminster:
 - Starts from the principle that each person has a right to expect the highest level of care and protection, love, encouragement and respect we can give.
 - Acknowledges and will comply with all its responsibilities to safeguard children and adults at risk.
 - Reports all allegations of abuse to the police within one working day.
 - Recognises that everyone has the right to live free from violence, fear and abuse.
 - Is fully committed to supporting children, adults at risk to achieve their full potential in an environment where they are protected from exploitation, abuse and maltreatment.
 - Publishes details of who to contact if there are concerns about the welfare or safety of a child in churches or other settings in which Church activity occurs.
5. This policy must be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a member of the Clergy or Religious Community, a lay person, or a volunteer:
 - has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or an adult at risk.
 - has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or an adult at risk.
 - has behaved towards a child(ren) or an adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults.
 - has behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or adults at risk

¹ Adult at Risk, Care Act 2014 – an individual aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of their needs is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect

- has behaved in such a way that, by actions or omissions, his or her conduct has been intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a cleric or a religious.
6. If an allegation is made indicating that a child and or adult with vulnerabilities (including adult at risk) is in immediate danger the allegation must be reported to the police and the local authority children's department immediately.
 7. All allegations of abuse of children and/or adults at risk reported to anyone volunteering as a Parish Safeguarding Representative, or working or ministering within the Diocese, must be reported to the police and, in respect of those with children, the Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO) within one day.
 8. Anyone who reports allegations, provides information or articulates concerns about abuse will be listened to seriously, with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity.
 9. Any allegation of abuse or information or concern about possible abuse will be processed in accordance with all the Diocese's statutory obligations, with any associated good practice guidance, all CSSA Policies and Practice Guidance, and with this Diocesan Procedures on the Management of Allegations, Information and Concerns.
 10. Any person against whom an allegation is made (a respondent), or about whom information is received or a concern is raised, will be treated with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity. No assumption will be made as to the guilt of the respondent.
 11. The Diocese will act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working in partnership with the police, the LADO, health agencies, the Probation Service, other relevant agencies and external partners to safeguard and support children and adults with vulnerabilities² (including adults at risk) and to assist in bringing to justice anyone who has committed an offence.
 12. Anyone acting in the name of the Catholic Church in the Diocese has a responsibility to act in accordance with the Apostolic Letter "Vos Estis Lux Mundi" and the associated Vademecum (handbook), the CSSA Guidance, this Policy, and the Manual, when it appears that any child has suffered or is at risk of abuse.
 13. All those who have a role within the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Westminster (the Diocese) whether in paid employment, in voluntary work, or as clergy or religious must comply with the requirements of this Policy

² Caring Safely for Others recognises that an individual can be vulnerable at different times of their life and that the Safeguarding Service and clergy work within this scope to provide pastoral support, safeguarding and care the SGS.