



RCDOW Safeguarding News



AUTUMN-WINTER – October/December 2021

Foreword by Geraldine Allen

Safeguarding Co-ordinator for the Diocese of Westminster

Dear PSR,

It is hard to believe that 2021 is nearly over – so much has been achieved by you as PSR's in your Parishes, even during lock down.

Thank you for using the time to catch up on your DBS checks and attend refresher training.

We hope in 2022 to be able to come out to meet more of you in your Parishes, to pick up and learn about the ways you manage the role of PSR, so that we can share this more widely.

The CSSA have published a new set of standards and as we review these we will look to ensure that the service we offer meets these standards – they are available for you to review on the CSSA website.

I wish you a peaceful and healthy Christmas. Best wishes.

Geraldine Allen

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PSRs 2021 Achievements

- Number of new PSRs inducted in 2021: **51**
- Number of PSRs in parishes by end of 2021: **275**
- Number of PSRs in ethnic chaplaincies by end 2021: **40**
- Number of PSRs in eastern catholic chaplaincies by end 2021: **5**
- Number of long serving PSRs who attended refresher training by end 2021: **96**
- Number of employed catechetical coordinators trained: **35**
- Number of safeguarding parish visits Sept/Dec 2021: **14**
- Supported **1** parish to deliver safeguarding training to parish's volunteers.
- Set of safeguarding policies and procedures produced on behalf of Caritas.

PSRs Plan for 2022

- Planned induction training for new PSRs: **6**
- Planned refresher training for long serving PSRs: **4**
- Planned deanery meetings for PSRs, PPs, activity leaders: **10** face to face, **6** Zoom
- Planned resume of basic safeguarding training for new diocesan employees: TBC with HR
- Planned big annual conference for PSRs: **1**
- DPSR (Deanery PSR) project
- Children safeguarding poster
- Safeguarding booklet for all diocesan volunteers
- Diocesan safeguarding staff training to enhance the support available to PSRs.
- Ongoing support via phone, emails, in person to all PSRs, PPs and activity leaders working with the vulnerable.

4 AREAS of PSR's WORK



These are:

- **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

PSRs are the first point of contact for the parish community should anyone wish to disclose a safeguarding concern. The PSRs are hence 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 24/48 hours of learning about the concern. This is a vital area of work in order to assure an appropriate response to anyone in need of support. 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 securely recruiting anyone who wish to work/volunteer in the parishes with groups of vulnerable like children and/or adults at risk. This process 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 knowing and implementing both 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. <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/practice-guidance/> Please click on the link to be directed on the page where to find the above mentioned guidance.

- **ADVANCING A "CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING"**

This part of the work aims at educating the parish communities with a basic understanding of what safeguarding means and does to keep everybody safe from harm and abuse. PSRs should encourage the community to enrol in safeguarding EduCare online modules by contacting Mr Gabriele Sedda at gabrielesedda@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 to Alpha Cards to recognise and responding to abuse and more. A so called "safeguarding corner" in the parishes consisting of a small table to keep the literature would be ideal. All SG literature can also be downloaded from each diocesan parish micro website (About/Safeguarding).



4 AREAS OF PSRs
WORK pdf.pdf

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS:

Please email any concern to: safeguarding@rcdow.org.uk

CSSA GUIDANCE

Responding to Domestic Abuse allegations or concerns – guidance for use in parishes

During the coronavirus pandemic staying at home was essential to prevent the virus from spreading. But, for some people home isn't safe. On the 27th April 2020 the BBC reported that calls to a national domestic abuse helpline rose by 49% and killings doubled weeks after the lockdown. There was also a 35% rise in calls to a Men's Advice Line.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52433520>

It is possible that there will be those in your church who have been affected by domestic abuse.

Churches have re-opened in various forms and to varying degrees. Churches are viewed by many as 'safe places' and, in light of the figures represented above, we need to be prepared to receive disclosures or concerns being raised. This guidance has been provided to assist you in dealing with these situations.

For clarity, domestic abuse, or domestic violence, is defined across Government as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse' covers a range of types of abuse, including, but not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet>

The safety of victims is paramount.

Dial 999 if you witness a violent incident, if the person needs medical care or there is an immediate risk to life.

For the full document including practical advice about how to support a person in relation to domestic abuse, please visit the CSSA page at <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/national-safeguarding-policy/>

RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE DOCUMENT

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

SAFE RECRUITMENT:

DBS Matters

New DBS Administrator

We've had some changes in personnel since the last newsletter. Euan Brady has left and we have a new administrator, Alex Dance, who started with us last month. Please find Alex's contact details below.

Alex Dance – alexanderdance@rcdow.org.uk – 07874 878 712 (Working days: Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

DBS Team Contact Details

To ensure that your query/application is processed as soon as possible can you use the following email addresses when contacting the DBS team;

dbadmin@rcdow.org.uk – use this for all DBS queries. Please do not copy other team members into this.

dbssubmissions@safeguardrcdow.org.uk – use this to submit your DBS applications.

N.B. This address is for application submissions only.

Changes to ID verification guidance and new forms

As some of you may already be aware, new ID guidance has been produced by DBS to comply with new *Right to work* requirements. With this change some documents will no longer be accepted by DBS and there will only now be routes for UK or Non UK applicants.

For more information about the routes please refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines/id-checking-guidelines-for-standardenhanced-dbs-check-applications-from-1-july-2021>.

The new guidance is now in effect and CSSA have updated the DBS3 and DBS4 forms to reflect this, the new forms have been emailed to you and are also available to download from our website, <https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safe-recruitment-including-dbs/>

N.B. The safer recruitment forms will also be updated in the near future to show the CSSA branding so please look out for further updates on this, all new forms will be to available on our website and PSR Resource area.

References

Another reminder about references as we are still receiving a large number of applications without them. References should be requested at the parish by the activity group leader or PSR. The references must be checked at the parish to assess the applicant's suitability before sending all the safer recruitment forms to the Safeguarding Office. Please include the role description when sending out a reference request; role descriptions and guidance on how to create one, can be found at <https://safeguardrcdow.org.uk/safer-recruitment/roledescriptions/>.

If anyone is having problems logging into the Resource area, please contact Maria mariaeid@rcdow.org.uk or safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk.

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT:

SAFEGUARDING PLANS

What are they and how do they help keeping our communities safe?

- 11.1 When a member of the Clergy or Religious, or a lay person wanting to attend Mass or take part in Church related activities, has had allegations made against them and after investigation concerns remain; where they have been convicted of an offence against a child or adult or where there is no conviction but concerns remain about their conduct towards children or adults, they will be supported to participate in the Church using a Safeguarding Plan. The Safeguarding Plan is not a legally binding document but seeks to encourage the individual to make a commitment to behave in a safe manner within the Church.
- 11.2 Where the allegation is shown to have been false, malicious, or unsubstantiated and innocence has been clearly established, there is no requirement to implement a Safeguarding Plan.
- 11.3 The purpose of the Safeguarding Plan is to:
- Minimise potential risks to and protect the interests of alleged victims and their families;
 - Ensure that any potential risks to the person concerned or others which are identified by statutory agencies or other processes, are managed;
 - Reduce the potential for further concerns or allegations to arise;
 - Support and enable a clear and transparent investigation process that cannot be unduly influenced by the person concerned;
 - If relevant and necessary, determine what aspects of ministry, office, or role the person concerned will be required to withdraw from;
 - Identify practical and emotional support for the person concerned including for Clergy and Religious, a suitable place to reside or a suitable community to belong to;
 - Identify and agree the roles and responsibilities of identified personnel from within Church and other involved external agencies.
- 11.4 It is recognised that not all the above will apply in every situation.
- 11.5 By signing and adhering to the Safeguarding Plan, there is not a presumption of guilt on the part of the diocese or Religious Congregation.
- 11.6 The Safeguarding Plan must be informed by a process of identifying risks or potential risks. This can be done using the [Risk Information Framework](#)¹ or using a different method that clearly identifies the areas of risk to others and the subject of the Safeguarding Plan. Risks must be clearly identifiable on case records so that they can be linked to any restrictions or supports identified in the Safeguarding Plan.
- 11.7 Risk identification must be informed by current specialist assessments where these are available e.g. those by statutory agencies or other professionals. The appropriateness of inclusion of information from other agencies or individuals should be confirmed with them first.
- 11.8 The views of the accused person and, where appropriate, the views of the person who has been harmed, made the allegations, or raised the concern will be sought and included in the Safeguarding Plan.
- 11.9 Unless formally agreed (and recorded) otherwise, it is the diocese in which the priest is incardinated or the Religious Congregation to which the Religious belongs, which is the responsible authority for drawing up, managing and reviewing a Safeguarding Plan.

¹ This is not a comprehensive specialist risk assessment in respect of current or future risk of reoffending or the behaviour reoccurring.

Frequently asked questions

Questions:

Q: Where can I find parish role descriptions?

Q: I would like to have some information regarding my CELEBRET

Q: Do the diocesan DBS Team process DBS for school staff even though it is staff from a catholic school?

Q: I had my PSR's training time ago and I do not remember now what DBS forms I need to submit for both new applicants or re-checks.

Q: Can a school DBS be used for parish volunteering roles?

Q: I can't access my PSR's dedicated email address for the parish. Can you help?

For any additional clarification please write to:

Answers:

A: All the available role descriptions can be found on the diocesan website at <https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safe-recruitment-including-dbs/> If for any reason you can't find the role description you need please do contact us at safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

A: The diocesan Chancery department is responsible to provide information and support regarding CELEBRET for priests. Please do contact them directly at celebret@rcdow.org.uk OR chancery@rcdow.org.uk

A: No, the diocesan DBS Team do not process any DBS for school staff.

A: Please download/print the SAFE RECRUITMENT FORMS CHECKLIST from the diocesan website that you can find at <https://rcdow.org.uk/safeguarding/safe-recruitment-including-dbs/> This is a highly helpful tool that will guide you to checking what you need to provide applicants with and then, once fully filled, return the relevant forms to the dedicated email address dbsadmissions@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

A: Not always unfortunately as DBS are not easily 'portable'. In order to be used for parish volunteering roles they have to cover the exact same details for the role that the candidate is going to cover at the parish and they also need to have been previously registered on the Government's Update Service. If you are in doubt please email your query to dbsadmin@rcdow.org.uk

A: Absolutely we can help. For password retrieval and other support with your SG dedicated email account for your parish please write to safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk and please, 'disturb' us any time you need support, no matter how small your query may seem. We prefer to be 'disturbed' many and many times making everyone safe rather than sorry. We mean it ☺

safeguardingsupport@rcdow.org.uk

ADVANCING A CULTURE OF SAFEGUARDING: E-Learning and other sources

NSPCC

Learning Podcasts

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=nsppc+episode+40&docid=608031759974429924&mid=7D0F6855B1597D053DBC7D0F6855B1597D053DBC&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>



EduCare/TES

The Equality Act 2010

Why do equality and diversity matter? According to government figures, ethnic minorities make up 13 per cent of the UK population, approximately 21 per cent of people have reported a disability, and in 2016, 18 per cent of people were aged 65 and over (with this figure projected to rise to nearly 25 per cent by 20463). But inequalities still persist. Women still earn on average 18.4 per cent less per hour than men. Less academically able, but better off children, overtake more-able, poorer children at school by the age of six. Disabled people are still more than twice as likely to be out of work than non-disabled people6 and white people are still 12 per cent more likely to find work than people from ethnic minorities. One in five older people are unsuccessful in getting quotations for motor insurance. These inequalities will affect almost every one of us, and everyone we know, at some point in our lives. It is in all our interests to create a better, fairer society. A starting point for this is for us all to understand the fundamentals of equality and diversity and how they affect us, and recognise some of the barriers that can prevent equality being realised, such as prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, victimisation and harassment. Find out more in our Equality and Diversity training course.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yue1glAllAs&list=PLjGboJbyrdHuM9oSNUZtdzFOa4ghZPRnv&index=2>

FOR THE FULL EduCare/TES Newsletter please use the link here below:

<https://www.educare.co.uk/Media/Resources/Safeguarding%20Matters%20Issue%206.pdf>

SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

Victim Support marks one-year anniversary of service supporting victims and survivors of church based abuse, Safe Spaces

In September 2021 independent charity Victim Support marks the first anniversary of its service, Safe Spaces, a joint Anglican and Catholic Church in England and Wales project that provides vital support services for survivors of church-related abuse.

Since it launched on 29th September 2020, the service has supported 188 people. On average, Safe Spaces support 65 survivors each month, for various amounts of time as support is tailored to each individual and their needs.

The service comprises a team of trained support advocates, who have undergone specialist training in supporting survivors of sexual violence and have qualified as recognised Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA). Staff have specifically been trained in how churches respond to abuse cases and the issues affecting those who have had, or still have, a relationship with the church.

The support provided over the last year by dedicated caseworkers has included advocacy with the church and other authorities, trauma informed emotional support, information, advice and mediation, as well as connecting survivors with peer support organisations.

This has been made possible by the support of survivors who helped design and develop Safe Spaces from the beginning. Survivors have actively engaged with the service providing feedback, insight and information, and our survivor steering group has provided vital expertise in shaping and delivering the service.

Lesley McLean, Victim Support's Area Manager, said: "The support provided by Safe Spaces over the past year highlights the need for services supporting survivors of church-related abuse. We are immensely grateful to those survivors who have engaged with us to help shape the service, and their input, feedback and advice has been invaluable.

"As we move into our second year, we want survivors who have not yet accessed our service to know how committed we are to supporting victims of church-based abuse. Safe Spaces provides specialist support, independent of the police or any faith-based institution."

Safe Spaces is a national service for anyone aged 18 or over and who feel they have experienced church related abuse of any form in England and Wales, regardless of whether survivors have reported the incident to the Church authorities or the police or whether they are a current active member of a church. Support is provided for as long as the survivor needs. If face-to-face support is also required, contact and referrals will be made with appropriate local organisations.

The service is currently undergoing an independent evaluation commissioned by Safe Spaces England and Wales (SSEW).

Victims and survivors wishing to use the service can contact Safe Spaces anonymously through its independent helpline on 0300 303 1056, email safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk or via live chat on the service [website](#).

Anyone wishing to take part in the SSEW evaluation can do so by taking part in the online survey found here: <https://www.research.net/r/HHSJW7W>.

<https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/>

SAFEGUARDING NEWS

Governance: National and Local Changes

In November 2021 the new Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) website became live, which formally launched the new organisation.

The website explains the reason for the change from CSAS to the CSSA:

In October 2019, an independent review of the safeguarding structures and arrangements within the Catholic Church in England and Wales was set in motion. Given the significant changes in the social and political environment since the work done by Lord Nolan in 2001 and by the Cumberlege Commission in 2007, along with the greater numbers involved in safeguarding in the Church, it was felt that such a review was clearly overdue.

The need for change was fuelled by the awareness of those who had suffered due to the failings in existent structures and the desire to prevent future hurt. Case studies showed that even when abuse was known, the Church was slow to address it and, in some instances, ignored it. Repeated failures betrayed the moral purpose of the Church and greatly reduced its credibility and moral standing. Change was clearly needed. The review led by Ian Elliott, sought in particular to listen and learn from those who had experienced abuse ultimately making a series of proposals and recommendations to address these failings and to reshape the safeguarding provision in the Catholic Church going forward. The recommendations of this report, along with those made by the separate Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) were wholly accepted by the Bishops conference in November of 2020.

Central to these recommendations was the replacement of the then existent national safeguarding bodies: The National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC) and Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS) with three newly constituted entities:

- 1. The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency: A new professional standards body with regulatory powers.*
- 2. A dedicated entity regarding safeguarding for Religious Life Groups, which are more formally defined as Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (ICLSAL) covering religious orders and congregations.*
- 3. A National Tribunal to address the canonical matters connected to clergy discipline and canonical offences, exercising jurisdiction exclusively in the canonical forum but extending to preliminary case evaluation and beyond.*

The Diocese of Westminster will now be working to the Policy and Guidance contained on the CSSA website.

In addition, one of the recommendations made by Ian Elliot was that the Safeguarding Commission should be replaced by a Safeguarding Committee, which is a Sub Committee of the Trustees body. Westminster has implemented this recommendation, with a New Safeguarding Committee being formed and Chaired by Baroness Nuala O'Loan.

VATICAN NEWS

Pope Francis: A healthy environment is right of every human being

In a message to the Council of Europe, Pope Francis reiterates his call for immediate action to protect our common home. The message was sent on the occasion of a panel of discussion on environment and human rights organized by the Council's Assembly in preparation for the COP26 on climate change.

By Lisa Zengarini

Ahead of the COP-26 in Glasgow, the Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has convened a high-level panel and interactive debate on theme: "The environment and human rights" on Wednesday. The "right to a safe, healthy and sustainable environment" will be the focus of its Autumn Session taking place in Strasbourg from 27 to 30 September 2021.

In a video message to the participants sent on Wednesday, Pope Francis commended the initiative and the Council of Europe's efforts on this fundamental issue, reiterating his call for immediate action for the care of our common home.

He said that the Holy See, although an Observer nation, follows with particular attention all the Organization's activity in this regard, "in the conviction that every concrete initiative and decision which can improve the dramatic situation facing our planet's health must be supported and valued."

Earth is greatest resource God has given us

He recalled his previous address to the PACE of 25 November 2014, in which he reminded that the earth "is the greatest resource which God has given to us and is at our disposal not to be disfigured, exploited, and degraded, but so that (...) we can live in this world with dignity."

He also referred to his Encyclical Letter *Laudato si'* highlighting the importance of caring for our common home, as "a universal principle that involves not only the Christians, but every person of good will who has the protection of the environment at heart."

While commending the convening of the debate as a "valid contribution" to the COP-26, Pope Francis pointed out that any initiative of the Council of Europe should not be limited to the European continent, but "reach out to the whole world".

This is why, he said, the Council's determination to create of a new legal framework linking the care of environment to the respect of fundamental human rights is particularly appreciated by the Holy See.



For full article please follow the link here below:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-09/francis-healthy-environment-human-right.html>

CONTACT DETAILS the essential

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

Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Sarah Robinson

Email: sarahrobinson@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 020 7798 9186 / 07851 250 897

Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Rebecca Williams

Email: rebeccawilliams@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 020 7798 9096 / 07851 250 895

Safeguarding Officer (Review):

Name: Monawara Bakht

Email: monawarabakht@rcdow.org.uk

Safeguarding Officer (Review):

Name: Lydia Bowles

Email: lydiabowlest@rcdow.org.uk

Team Administrator:

Name: Gabriele Sedda

Email: gabrielesedda@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 020 7798 9356 / 07851 250 899

Safeguarding Office Manager:

Rika Pfaff

Email: rikapfaff@rcdow.org.uk

DBS Administrator:

Name: Jackie Krobo

Email: jackiekrobo@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 020 7798 9352 / 07515 329 617

DBS Administrator:

Name: Alex Dance

Email: alexanderdance@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 07874 878 712

DBS Administrator:

Name: Johanna Ashley

Email: johannaashley@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 07874 861 060

Safeguarding Support Officer:

Name: Arianna Sommariva

Email: ariannasommariva@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 020 7798 9358 / 07719 563 119

Parish Safeguarding Support Officer:

Name: Maria Eid

Email: mariaeid@rcdow.org.uk

Phone: 07874 878 710

Other Contacts:

Catholic Safeguarding Standard Agency (CSSA)

Email: admin@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

Phone: 020 7901 1920

Website: <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

**Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas
and a healthy and joyful New Year**



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.