DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE POLICY STATEMENT

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT:

ADULTS LEADERS AND VOLUNTEER HELPERS

Policy prepared by:	Pilgrimage Executive Team
Third Party Policy:	No
Approval of Lourdes Pilgrimage Review Committee	24 June 2025
Approval of the Safeguarding Committee	3 July 2025
Approval of The Directors of the Trustee	11 July 2025
Review Date	Reviewed May 2026 March 2027

1. Introduction

Adult Leaders and Volunteer helper are committed to being positive role models, demonstrating high standards of behaviour, spiritual faith and building the confidence of the children, young people and adults at risk that they are working with on the Westminster Lourdes Pilgrimage.

This code of conduct outlines the expected behaviour and responsibilities of Adult Leaders and Volunteer Helpers whilst caring for, and working with children, young people and adults at risk during the Westminster Lourdes Pilgrimage. Please remember that this code is not exhaustive, and you should always consult with professionals, and follow relevant professional codes of conduct, laws and guidelines.

Regardless of the venue or location, including when travelling to another country, the Safeguarding policies and procedures for The Diocese of Westminster, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency will be followed. If abuse occurs in the UK or another country, the legal processes in that country will also apply.

In Lourdes, the Sanctuary guidance will also apply and Leaders and Helpers need to be familiar with the 'Charter for Protection of Minors and Vulnerable People 2023'.

French laws will apply in Lourdes.

2. Leaders and volunteer helpers are expected to:

2.1 Promote Wellbeing

- Ensure the safety of all children, young people and adults at risk, by ensuring group sessions are safely planned and effectively supervised.
- Foster teamwork and co-operation between everybody, promoting trust and mutual respect.
- Discourage and stop any rough or dangerous play, bullying, inappropriate language or other inappropriate behaviour.
- Treat all children, young people and adults at risk fairly and not show favouritism.
- Be positive, approachable and offer praise to promote the objectives of the group always.
- Listen sensitively and use clear and respectful language, adapting your communication style to their abilities and ensuring they understand the information being shared.
- Respond to concerns and allegations promptly and appropriately in line with national and Diocesan procedures

2.2 Reporting and Disclosure

- Report any concerns or suspicions of abuse, neglect, or mistreatment of vulnerable adults or children to the Pilgrimage Safeguarding Representative following the established protocols.
- Cooperate fully with investigations and provide accurate information as required.

2.3 Safety

- Prioritise the safety of children, young people and adults at risk, taking necessary precautions to prevent accidents, injuries, or harm.

- Follow established procedures and guidelines for safeguarding, moving and handling, medication administration, and any specific care tasks, seeking guidance when unsure.
- Administer first aid in the presence of others, and without removing the person's clothing, unless it is necessary. Seek help as appropriate from emergency services, the pilgrimage medical team or the pilgrimage management team

2.4 Promote Autonomy, Respect and Dignity

- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of children, young people and adults at risk are enforced, recognising their individuality, preferences, and cultural background.
- Promote the full participation and involvement of all children and young people, recognising and addressing the additional needs of some children and young people e.g. disability or with specific needs.
- Constructively challenge all discrimination, treating all with respect, dignity, and kindness, irrespective of their age, gender, race, religion, or disability.
- Do not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, ability, social class, race, cultural background, religious beliefs or sexual identity.
- Respect, promote and support the right of children, young people and adults at risk to make their own choices and decisions, provided this does not threaten the rights, safety and legitimate interests of others.
- Encourage children, young people and adults at risk to point out behaviours or attitudes that they do not like.
- Ensure that sanctions do not humiliate or harm a child, young person or adult at risk

2.5 Privacy and Confidentiality

- Maintain strict confidentiality about the personal and medical information of children and adults, except when sharing it is essential for their safety, to ensure the best possible care or is required by law.
- Respect their right to privacy and ensure that neither personal conversations nor information are disclosed to others without proper consent.

2.6 Professionalism, Boundaries, Relationships and Power

- Attend all available training offered.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries with other leaders, volunteers, children, young people and adults at risk avoiding any behaviour that could be misconstrued or make them uncomfortable.
- Refrain from engaging in personal relationships beyond the scope of your role, understanding the power dynamics involved.
- Do not abuse the position of trust for personal benefit e.g. financial gain, personal, intimate or sexual relationships.
- Be conscious of the explicit and implicit power vested in the role of leader, or volunteer helper (explicit being no room for confusion or doubt, implicit being connected with).
- Acknowledge the limitations of time, experience, skill and competence – know where, when and how to ask for support when needed.
- Deal with differences of opinion with respect.

- Work to people's strengths and never bully, abuse, manipulate or denigrate.

2.7 Personal Conduct

- Act always in accordance with the core values of the Catholic faith and ensure that your behaviour does not bring the church into disrepute.
- Provide an example you wish others to follow.
- Work in a way that is honest, reliable and transparent, never seeking to deceive or manipulate.
- Dress appropriately and maintain personal hygiene to ensure a clean and presentable appearance.
- Refrain from using blasphemous, violent, discriminatory, or offensive language and behaviour.
- Whilst working or caring for children, young people or adults at risk refrain from smoking, vaping, or consuming alcohol.
- Do not use illicit drugs.
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption and keep in mind that the effects of alcohol can still be present many hours later and may impact a person's ability to carry out their volunteer or leadership role safely.
- Do not engage in any form of sexual or intimate relations (including verbal banter, flirtation, using one's gaze to signal attraction, texting, image sharing etc.) with children, young people or adults at risk.

3. Any breaches of the Code of Conduct will be addressed by the group leader. More serious or persistent breaches may result in formal action being taken to address the concerns; this could include a referral to the Police or Statutory agencies.

3.1 I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it.

Signature of Leader/Helper:	
Print name Leader/Helper:	
Date:	
Signature of Leader or Safeguarding Representative:	
Date:	

4. References:

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, Practice Guidance for Arranging Pilgrimages involving Children, young People and Adults at Risk. July 2021. Accessed www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, Sample Code of Conduct for Leaders and Helpers. July 2021. Accessed www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

Charter for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons 2023. www.lourdes-france.org