

# DIOCESE OF CANTERBURY

Supplementary Safeguarding Booklet:  
The Parish Safeguarding Handbook.



This supplementary booklet has been developed to complement and support the Parish Safeguarding Handbook produced by the Church of England, which together comprise the Diocese of Canterbury's policy, procedures and processes for responding to a safeguarding concern that arises within the diocese.

The Diocese fully adopts and endorses the House of Bishop's (HoB) Safeguarding Children and Adult Policies and its supporting guidance and procedures, including the Parish Safeguarding Handbook.

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## PARISH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Parish Safeguarding Policy Statement

It is a requirement that every parish in the Diocese certifies, adopts, displays and implements a parish safeguarding policy statement (see the Model Parish Safeguarding on the Church of England's Safeguarding website). This should be adopted annually as an agenda item at the first meeting of the new PCC and then displayed prominently in each church. This ensures a PCC discussion of safeguarding at least once a year and helps to ensure that each parish is complying with expectations under its insurance cover.

### Parish Safeguarding Officer

It is a requirement that every parish in the Diocese appoints a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to be the key link between the Diocese and the parish on safeguarding matters. She/he will have an overview of all parish safeguarding issues and will monitor the implementation of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook and Diocesan Supplementary Safeguarding Booklet procedures and guidance. There can be a separate PSO for children and adults or one person can carry the combined responsibilities.

The Safeguarding Team at Diocesan House should be advised of any change of PSO. A job description can be found on the Church of England's Safeguarding website (details found at the end of this booklet).

### Parish Disclosures Officer

Parishes should appoint a Parish Disclosure Officer (PDO) to liaise between the parish and the Diocese on the administrative aspects of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosures. The PDO is responsible for ensuring that those working with children/adults who require a Disclosure are checked and that checks are updated every 5 years. PDO's have a very different role to the PSO but the same person may hold both positions. The Safeguarding Team at Diocesan House should be advised of any change of PDO. A job description for the PDO is available on the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website (details at the end of this Booklet).

## Insurance

The HoB safeguarding policy documents require parishes to have appropriate insurance cover. Insurers require the parish to adopt best practice regarding safeguarding, based on available guidance. Therefore a parish runs the risk of invalidating its insurance cover relating to safeguarding issues if it fails to follow basic guidance provided by the HoB safeguarding policies. The parish insurers should be notified of any serious safeguarding allegations/actions involving paid or voluntary parish workers. Similarly consideration should be given in such circumstances, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (DSA), as to whether the Charity Commission should be informed.

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIOCESE

The key means of providing support to parishes is through the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (DSA) who are available to assist parishes with any safeguarding queries or concerns regarding both children and vulnerable adults. Their contact details can be found at the end of this booklet, together with details of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

If there are safeguarding concerns about a child or vulnerable adult the key message is to contact the DSA immediately.

In rare cases where immediate safety may be in jeopardy the Police should be contacted immediately prior to informing the DSA.

A flowchart setting out how to respond is set out within the Parish Safeguarding Handbook if there is a safeguarding issue in your church - both in emergency and non-emergency situations.

### Safeguarding Advisory Panel

In compliance with the HoB recommendations the Diocese and Cathedral have a Safeguarding Advisory Panel which oversees safeguarding in the parishes and the Cathedral. It is responsible for developing policy, procedures and practice guidance and for monitoring their implementation. Details of the membership and Terms of Reference can be found on the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website.

### The Safeguarding Executive Group

The Diocese has a Safeguarding Executive Group that evaluates risks and helps parishes and others to manage risk posed by individuals and situation. It also advises parishes on all blemished DBS disclosures.

Details of the membership and Terms of Reference can be found on the safeguarding section of the Diocesan website.

### Disclosures from the Disclosure Barring Service

The Diocese has registered with the DBS as an 'Umbrella Body' so that it can access the Disclosure Barring Service on behalf of parishes and other Diocesan staff, both paid and voluntary and those applying to work with

children and vulnerable adults. It has issued comprehensive guidance on the process and criteria for obtaining Disclosures which can be found on the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Office (01227 459401) can advise on any queries over which individuals and which activities require a DBS Disclosure and in what circumstances a Disclosure in one role can be carried over into another role in the Diocese.

## Complaints Procedure

The Diocese has a complaints procedure for those wishing to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues. If things cannot be resolved locally complaints can be made to the Bishop or Diocesan Secretary.

## Training

The Diocese has a responsibility to provide safeguarding training to all leaders and helpers in our churches. The HoB Policy requires all licensed clergy to complete compulsory safeguarding training as well as PCC members and all involved in working with children or vulnerable adults. The level of training required will vary according to the role being undertaken by individuals. Some of the modules are delivered through e-learning and some through a face to face training either by the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer or by Parish Safeguarding Trainers. Full details of the training requirements can be found in section 6 of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook and on the Diocesan website, which also includes instructions on how to book onto the training.

[www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding/training/](http://www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding/training/)

## Church Schools

Church schools in the Diocese are not covered by these guidelines. Safeguarding responsibilities for schools come under Kent County Council and, in the case of independently run schools, by the Kent Safeguarding Children Board through the Local Authority Designated Officer for safeguarding (LADO).

Information sharing protocols between the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and the Diocesan Board of Education are available on the Diocesan website.

## ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF CHILDREN

### Abuse by Children and Young people

Abuse by children and young people is more common than is generally realised. Whilst it is not unusual for children and young people to be curious about the opposite sex and for them to experiment sexually, where a child or young person is in a position of power and responsibility over another and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abuse. Where one child forces themselves on another child of any age, this also is abusive. Such situations should be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved and would be investigated in the same way by the child protection agencies. This is important as the effect on the child survivor may be as great, and the perpetrator could be experiencing abuse and be in need of help themselves. Approximately one third of the sexual abuse of children is perpetrated by children and young people under the age of 18 (Hackett 2014).

### Domestic Servitude

Domestic Servitude is a form of modern day slavery, it usually involves someone from another country. They are normally employed under the guise of 'live in' help however the person is not able to leave and is being controlled and exploited. It is a form of forced labour that often goes unnoticed. If you suspect someone you know or have come into contact with is in this form of modern day slavery please contact your DSA immediately.

### Forced marriages and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

The term 'forced marriage' is used to describe a marriage in which one or more of the parties is married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties presumably consent to the assistance of their parents or a third party such as a matchmaker, in choosing a spouse. Forced marriages are illegal in the United Kingdom and seen as a breach of Human Rights Law. If someone tells you that they are being forced into a marriage against their will please contact your DSA immediately.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the practice of 'cutting' or 'female circumcision' whereby girl's external genital organs are partially or totally removed for cultural or non-medical reasons. This procedure is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health



consequences. It is illegal to practice FGM in the UK, or assist someone to do this to themselves either in the UK or abroad or to take British Nationals or permanent UK residents abroad for FGM whether or not it is lawful in that country. Signs of FGM can include visiting a country where FGM is practiced and school age girls talking about attending a ‘special ceremony’ or event, also being absent for a long time and a change in their behaviour on their return. If you think someone is either going to be subjected to FGM or participating in FGM please contact your DSA immediately.

## Gangs and County Lines

Kent Police describe gangs as those:

*“... considered to be a group of people who spend time in public places that:*

- see themselves (and are seen by others) as a noticeable group, and
- engage in criminal activity and violence.

*The majority of young people are not involved in gangs, but the behaviour associated with them can have a significant impact on individuals, their families, friends and communities.”*

County Lines is a phrase to describe where gangs based primarily in large cities such as London, use young people to bring illegal drugs or substances into more rural areas or smaller towns and areas. This can often involve young people from any background who have been groomed or coerced into being part of the gang. Kent Police advise that the following can be signs of young people’s involvement in gangs:

- talking and dressing differently
- not going to school
- staying out unusually late
- poor behaviour
- unexplained sums of money and possessions
- unexplained injuries
- graffiti-style tags on possessions
- carrying weapons
- interest in music which glorifies weapons and gang culture
- getting involved in fights
- committing crimes such as shoplifting.

If a young person you know or a parent advises you that they suspect that their young person is involved in county lines or gangs please contact your DSA immediately.

## Radicalisation

Sometimes the signs of radicalisation are difficult to notice as they can also form part of normal teenage behaviour. The risk of being radicalised can also apply to adults as well as young people. Some of the signs of a person who has been radicalised can include:

- isolating themselves from friends and family
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness especially around internet use.

If you think someone you know has been radicalised please contact your DSA immediately.

## ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF ADULTS

### Human Trafficking

The number of people trafficked for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, ‘sweat-shop labour’, or other exploitation has risen sharply in the UK. Violence, intimidation and restriction of liberty often go hand in hand. Detailed guidelines on the recognition of human trafficking are available on the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website.

If you think someone you know is involved in or the victim of human trafficking please contact your DSA immediately.

### Spiritual Abuse in respect of children and adults

Work is being undertaken by the National Safeguarding Steering Group (a sub-group of the House of Bishops) to establish a clear policy on this area of abuse. In the interim the Diocese has adopted the definition of spiritual abuse as set out by Dr Lisa Oakley who is working with the National Safeguarding Team on this policy and foremost expert in this area of work.

*Spiritual abuse is “a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of scriptures or teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuse, the suggestion that the abuse has a ‘divine’ position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism” (Oakley, 2018).*

If you think someone you know is or has experienced spiritual abuse please contact your DSA.

## Deliverance Ministry Best Practice

Clergy may well encounter situations or individuals where evil or oppression is thought to be at work. The Church has much to offer through Christ's healing ministry including pastoral care and counselling. The Diocese has a team of deliverance ministry advisors who are available to provide advice to parishes and minister to those concerned. Particular caution must be exercised where children or vulnerable adults are in the household. If an enquiry about deliverance ministry involves a child or vulnerable adult then the Bishop's Adviser on the Deliverance Ministry and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor must be consulted. Further information on the deliverance ministry team, what they can offer and the referral process is available on the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website, together with a flow chart for deliverance ministry referrals.

## Coercive control

Coercive control is recognised as part of a domestic abuse pattern but also now has its own definition in UK law. Coercive control is when a person with whom you are personally connected, repeatedly behaves in a way which makes you feel controlled, dependent, isolate or scared.

If you suspect that you or someone you know is experiencing coercive control please contact you DSA immediately for advice or the person themselves can contact the police directly.

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

The HoB Safeguarding Guidelines for Safer Recruitment puts great emphasis on parishes adopting a robust safer recruitment policy for both paid and voluntary staff, please see the Parish Safeguarding Handbook page 13 for further information.

A key way of protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm is to ensure the careful recruitment of those working with them. In addition to these guidelines, expert advice should be taken about the recruitment of paid workers where employment law will apply. Some of the principles will apply to both groups.

In the recruitment, supervision and support of volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults the following good practice points should be followed:

- the parish should follow safer recruitment practices which are set out in the HOB's safeguarding guidelines for Safer Recruitment
- prospective volunteers should be regarded as job applicants
- volunteers (unpaid staff) should have a defined role with a written job description provided by the parish
- they should fill in a job application form
- two references should be sought
- for those under 18 years and in education, at least one reference must be from their school / college.
- any young person on work experience must have a reference from their school
- no young person under 18 years of age should be expected to take on a role with sole responsibility
- an enhanced DBS disclosure should be obtained if appropriate preceded by the filling in of the confidential declaration (downloadable from the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website) by the applicant. They must not take up post until the disclosure is returned
- their appointment offer should be confirmed in writing.
- there should be a 3 to 6 month probationary period before confirming the appointment, depending on the role
- there should be clear and consistent supervision arrangements

- there should be an annual review and supervision meetings should be not more than 3 months apart
- each parish should create and retain adequate records on all those working with children/vulnerable adults, taking care to store them securely.

The following forms are downloadable from the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website:

- an application form template for voluntary staff working with children and / or vulnerable adults
- a reference request form to send to nominated referees
- a job description and job agreement
- the Confidential Declaration.

A well conducted recruitment process protects the interests of both the PCC and the person appointed; it also makes clear to the person appointed the value the parish places on the work being undertaken and the contribution that the person appointed is making.

## RESPONDING PROMPTLY TO EVERY SAFEGUARDING CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

Please also refer to Section 7 in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook for further guidance and information as well as a quick flowchart guide.

If there are safeguarding concerns about a child or vulnerable adult the key message is to contact the DSA as soon as possible. Remember **DO NOT INVESTIGATE** and contact the DSA for advice and guidance.

In rare cases where immediate safety may be in jeopardy the police or Social Services should be contacted immediately.

If a child or adult needs urgent medical attention the appropriate emergency services should be called or the person taken to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department. The hospital staff should be told of any suspicions of abuse and the parish priest and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer informed as soon as possible. They **must** then inform the DSA.

If the person is not in immediate danger then concerns **must** be discussed immediately with either the parish priest or PSO. The DSA must be contacted too.

If there is uncertainty over whether abuse has occurred the same procedures apply. Concerns can always be discussed with the DSA without initially disclosing the names of the people involved.

The DSA will discuss and advise on how best to deal with the matter, in particular whether a referral should be made to Social Services and who should do that. This would normally be done by the DSA, although this can also be done by the parish.

If there are doubts about whether or not to make the referral and under what route, a consultation can be sought with Children's Social Services. Consultations and referrals would normally be initiated by the DSA.

## CARING PASTORALLY FOR ALLEGED VICTIMS / SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

Careful consideration will need to be given to the role that the parish has to support the victim of abuse and in some cases their family too. If the statutory agencies are involved in undertaking an investigation this should be done in consultation with them. It may also be appropriate to consider support for the person referring the matter and for the alleged perpetrator – although those providing such support should be different for each of these individuals.

### The Authorised Listener

Authorised Listeners provide an attentive and attuned ear to help individuals reflect on their feelings, assist in thinking about their next step and generally provide them with support. The Diocese has appointed a group of Authorised Listeners, all of whom are qualified professionals with counselling experience. They are able to offer up to 4 sessions free of charge. Any request for an Authorised Listener must be made via the DSA. Parishes are encouraged to draw attention to this service on their parish notice boards.



## A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVITIES

### Liaison with Prison Chaplains

It is known that a significant number of sex offenders worship within faith communities on release from prison. The DSA work with the police and maintain good working relationships in order for the police, probation service and Children's and Adult Social Services inform the Diocese of anyone coming out of prison who has offended against a child and that person is planning to worship in one of our church communities (see Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) 2012). Prison chaplains should also pass on this information.

### Confession

The Bishop emphasises that:

No priest should hear confession on a regular basis unless he/she is under the discipline of the confessional themselves (i.e. confession is part of their own spiritual practice and they are under supervision).

Any priest hearing a confession, regularly or otherwise, must say prior to hearing that confession the following statement of confidentiality and safeguarding:

*“If you touch on any matter in your confession that raises a concern about the wellbeing or safeguarding of another person or yourself, I am duty bound to pass that information on to the relevant agencies, which means that I am unable to keep such information confidential.”*

### Music Lessons in Church

Music lessons with young people will normally be arranged through a school or as a private arrangement between parent and teacher. However, if the church building is going to be used for any reason (i.e. the use of the organ) then the PCC retains a general responsibility for health and safety in activities carried out on its premises and needs insurance cover. The organist should, in this circumstance, complete a Confidential Declaration and be subject to an enhanced DBS if this has not already been done. No music lessons with a young person should take place in a church without the parent or another responsible adult

being present. A brief agreement should be drawn up to this effect for both to sign. Copies of the Model of Safer Working Practice should be given to the organist and parent; this is downloadable from the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website.

## Private Fostering

Those who privately foster children, who can include friends of the child's family, often do not know that they have to notify Children's Social Services of the arrangements. The definitions of private fostering and procedures involved are explained on the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan Website. Advice on the issue and/or specific cases can be sought from the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers.

## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be a really useful way of quickly and effectively communicating with both individuals and groups of people. As a result of the informal nature of social media it can easily mean that it is harder to maintain a professional distance when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Good practice would be to send messages to groups or sharing information publically rather than individually, as sending them a direct message is like meeting them in private.

If you are unsure about how to use social media in terms of communication or are or know someone who is having an issue with an existing online relationship then contact the DSAs for advice. Alternatively if you would like advice on how to effectively use social media please contact the Diocesan Communication Officer.

## FURTHER HELP AND GUIDANCE

If you need any help or support please contact a member of our Safeguarding Team ([www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding](http://www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding)).

**Karen Carolan-Evans**, Safeguarding Administrator (Lead for DBS checks and DBS training) – [01227 459401](tel:01227459401) or [safeguarding@diocant.org](mailto:safeguarding@diocant.org)

**Paul Brightwell**, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (Lead for Maidstone Archdeaconry and Deaneries of Canterbury and Reculver) – [07398009951](tel:07398009951) or [pbrightwell@diocant.org](mailto:pbrightwell@diocant.org)

**Fiona Coombs**, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (Lead for Ashford Archdeaconry and Deaneries of Thanet, East Bridge and West Bridge) – [07548232395](tel:07548232395) or [fcoombs@diocant.org](mailto:fcoombs@diocant.org)

**SJ Martin**, Safeguarding Trainer – [01227 459401](tel:01227459401) or [smartin@diocant.org](mailto:smartin@diocant.org)

Diocese of Canterbury Safeguarding Forms  
[www.canterburydiocese.org/guidance-forms-and-fees](http://www.canterburydiocese.org/guidance-forms-and-fees)

Church of England Safeguarding Website  
[www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding](http://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding)

### Other helpful contacts

Kent Police in an emergency – [999](tel:999)

Kent Children's Social Services – [03000 0411111](tel:03000411111) or out of hours on [03000 419191](tel:03000419191)

Kent Adult Services – [03000 416161](tel:03000416161) or out of hours on [03000 419191](tel:03000419191)



# The Diocese of Canterbury

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*Living faith, building community,  
transforming lives*

[www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding](http://www.canterburydiocese.org/safeguarding)