

Organisational structure and key roles

The National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC)

The NCSC is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Church's safeguarding policy and monitoring compliance. Mandated by the Conference of Bishops and Conference of Religious, it will ensure that standards are met and policies are implemented.

The NCSC comprises an independent lay chair; a Bishop, a member of the Conference of Religious and a lay member as vice chairs; representation from the Conference of Bishops; Conference of Religious and Chairs of Commissions; a Canon Lawyer/Parish Priest nominated by the Canon Law Society; as well as 4 lay members recruited for relevant expertise in the field of safeguarding and the criminal justice system.

The Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)

Whereas the NCSC is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Church's safeguarding policy, CSAS is responsible for driving and supporting improvements in practice. The primary role of CSAS is one of co-ordination, advice and support to the Catholic Church in England and Wales in respect of safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

CSAS reports to and provides expert advice to the NCSC on safeguarding matters and is accountable to the Bishops Conference and Conference of Religious through the NCSC

CSAS is the point of liaison with other national stakeholders concerned with safeguarding children and adults. This includes other Churches and secular organisations including government.

CSAS is the **Registered Body** for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

CSAS is located within the Department of Christian Responsibility and Citizenship, which is one of the Departments of the Bishops Conference. An appointed member of the Conference of Religious is a member of the Department to ensure they can play a full role in delivering a 'One Church' approach.

Being located within this Department provides peer support for the Director of CSAS and encourages cross-fertilisation of ideas and work to ensure safeguarding is part of the mainstream activity within the Church.

Safeguarding Commissions

Within each Diocese is a Safeguarding Commission, with an Independent lay chair who has extensive safeguarding experience through working with children and/or adults e.g. social care, police, probation, family law or health. There are also a small number of 'stand-alone' religious based Safeguarding Commissions (e.g. the Jesuits), each chaired by an independent lay person and with the same range of expertise as their Diocesan counterparts. Exact numbers and experience on the

Commission is determined locally but each must meet the requirements of the core membership¹ and ensure appropriate expertise is available.

Accountability

Each Safeguarding Commission is accountable to the Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese for all Diocesan safeguarding matters. In respect of Religious Orders aligned to a particular Safeguarding Commission, the Commission is accountable to the Congregational Leader and Trustees of the Order in respect of matters related to that Order.

Function

Each Commission leads on the strategic direction of safeguarding and provides independent oversight, scrutiny, advice and guidance on safeguarding related matters relating to dioceses, religious congregations and seminaries.

As a Commission, and through sub groups, each will:

- Secure a strategy for the promotion of good and safe environments for children and adults in all parishes and other apostolic works throughout the Diocese/Religious Congregation, in line with agreed national policies and procedures;
- Agree clear and unambiguous arrangements with all relevant Dioceses/Religious Congregations and Seminaries for liaison, consultation and working together regarding allegations against members of the Church;
- Undertake an assessment of needs to ensure that those accountable for budget allocation have sufficient information so that the safeguarding budget is adequate to ensure safe process and minimisation of risk;
- Ensure that the Bishop/Congregation Leader receives full information relevant to safeguarding incidents, together with recommendations;
- Receive all information relating to safeguarding matters from their Diocese/Religious Congregation;
- Ensure effective liaison with all relevant Statutory Agencies;
- Contribute to the development and review of national policies, principles and practice;
- Advise the Bishop/Congregation Leader on welfare matters in respect of parishes, and individuals and families within parishes, who have been victims of abuse;
- To the extent possible and taking into account all relevant factors ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the pastoral care of individuals and communities affected by child abuse;
- Support and advise on matters relating to long term arrangements for members of the Church (clergy, religious, and laity) who have been convicted of abuse or about whom there are significant concerns, including the commissioning of risk assessments;

¹ As set out in Towards a Culture of Safeguarding (2012)

- Ensure that the Diocese and Religious Congregations have strategies to raise awareness of and promote training in safeguarding matters;
- Monitor implementation of all safeguarding strategies and work plans and report regularly to the Trustees;
- Prepare quarterly update briefings for Trustees, one of which will be an Annual Report which will refer to safeguarding policy and procedures, current work and priorities, monitoring arrangements, identified needs and future plans and budgetary and resource requirements;
- Ensure that the Annual Report on the Diocese/Religious Congregation is timely, accurate and comprehensive;
- In line with CSAS's DBS policy and procedures document, establish a small panel of 2 or 3 individuals to whom confidential reference may be made when there are disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service which require a decision by the countersignatory, in order that an informed decision may be referred to the Bishop/Religious Leader;
- Ensure that the Diocese or Religious Congregation puts in place arrangements for training and supervision for the Safeguarding Coordinator; and
- To assist in the selection of nominees for the role of Safeguarding Coordinator.

In addition, each Commission may, if necessary, set up small sub groups of its members if issues of concern require more detailed work. Other people with specialist knowledge may be asked to participate if necessary.

Parish Priest

The parish priest has responsibility for the pastoral care of the community, with special regard for those most vulnerable. The priest is assisted in this responsibility by nominating a parish safeguarding representative.

Safeguarding Coordinators

The Safeguarding Coordinator is accountable to the Bishop, Congregational Leader or Seminary Rector and the appropriate Trustee Body for leading and managing the development of safeguarding practice and the implementation of policy and procedures within the Diocese, Congregation or Seminary. This accountability does not necessarily mean that those listed are the individuals responsible for line management of the Safeguarding Coordinators. Each Trustee body should have in place appropriate line management arrangements for the day to day oversight and support of Safeguarding Coordinators, as Safeguarding Coordinators should always work within the management structures of the organisation. On behalf of the Safeguarding Commission, the Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the Bishop or Congregational Leader is kept up to date on safeguarding matters.

On an annual basis, the safeguarding coordinator prepares safeguarding data that is provided to CSAS for inclusion in the annual report of the NCSC.

The Safeguarding Coordinator takes the lead in developing preventative practice, as well as responding to allegations of abuse against children and adults. They are responsible for liaising with, advising and guiding Safeguarding Representatives within their Diocese or Congregation when concerns or allegations are raised and informing and advising the Bishop or Congregational Leader on appropriate practice for managing concerns and allegations.

The Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for making or overseeing referrals to the Police and Social Services departments, in line with the Church's policy of mandatory reporting to statutory authorities, and for maintaining contact with statutory agencies whilst investigations are underway. Additionally, the Safeguarding Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the arrangements for production, monitoring and review of covenants of care, which includes ensuring the support needs of the person accused or convicted are addressed.

The Safeguarding Coordinator is often a key source of support for survivors or victims of abuse and liaises with other agencies, as required, for the purposes of addressing identified needs.

Additionally, the Safeguarding Coordinator will develop links with Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adult Boards and safeguarding services within their area.

Safeguarding Representatives

Each Parish and Religious Congregation must ensure that it has a safeguarding representative in place.

The Safeguarding Representative has responsibility for promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children, young people and adults and for providing advice on child and adult safeguarding matters within the Parish or Congregation.

The Safeguarding Representative is the link between the Parish or Congregation and the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The Safeguarding Representative will have relevant training and a sound knowledge of the national policies and procedures and know who to contact if a concern or allegation is raised.

The Safeguarding Representative has a key role in the administration of the safer recruitment process, including facilitating the DBS Disclosure process at a local level.

Clergy/Religious Advisor

In order for safeguarding to be effectively implemented and promoted within the Catholic Church a contextual awareness and understanding is vital. The Clergy/Religious Advisor, as a member of the Clergy/Religious, brings this expertise and experience to the safeguarding structure and leads in the promotion of safeguarding within the Clergy/Religious Congregations.

Administrator

The Administrator has responsibility for processing criminal record checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and maintaining safeguarding systems and records. The Administrator may support parish safeguarding representatives, deliver training and support the work of the Safeguarding Commission.

Diocesan or Religious Trustees

The property of each diocese and religious congregation is normally held by a Charitable Trust. The Trustees of the Charitable Trust are responsible for managing any risks to the Trust, and this includes ensuring that adequate safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented within the diocese or religious congregation, that adequate insurance is in place and that the terms of the insurance contracts are complied with. The trustees are also responsible for ensuring that any serious incidents which could present a risk to the Trust's beneficiaries, assets or reputation are properly managed and are reported to the Charity Commission.

Insurance Officer

Each Diocese or Religious Congregation should identify an appropriate person to be responsible for management of responses to complaints received by their organisation. This will include specific responsibility for liaison with the Insurance Intermediary and, where appropriate, with the organisation's Insurers and the Charity Commission. This person is known as the Insurance Officer.

All concerns or allegations received which relate to National Safeguarding Procedures must be reported by the Safeguarding Coordinator to the Insurance Officer.