



SAFEGUARDING ADVICE DURING COVID CRISIS

FOREWARD

Becky CAWSEY – Safeguarding Coordinator

As we begin the gradual process of reopening our churches for private prayer in line with the Archbishop's guidance, it's important that those of you who don't usually have much contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding Office know who we are and how to contact us:-

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Tracey HOLFORD (safeguarding officer) tracey.holford@cliftondiocese.com

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It is undeniable that the lockdown period has affected us all in different ways. For some people it has been a time to slow down and review their life, and for other people life has never been busier! Sadly, for some people, the pressure they have found themselves and their families under has been very hard to bear. During lockdown, organisations and charities have reported an increase in domestic abuse, child abuse, elderly abuse, neglect, mental health, and substance misuse. For some people, walking back into a church building after a long period of time might be the first opportunity they have to share their experience and speak about how they are feeling. Some may disclose incidents that need a Safeguarding response. This is intended to help you if you are faced with such a situation.

TO DO NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION

What is Safeguarding?

Every human being has a value and dignity which the Catholic faith acknowledges as coming directly from God's creation of male and female in his own image and likeness. This implies a duty to value all people and therefore to support them and protect them from harm. This is done by implementing legislation through policies and procedures.

In the Catholic Church this is demonstrated by the provision of carefully planned activities for children, young people and adults; supporting families under stress, caring for those hurt by abuse in the past, ministering to those who have caused harm.

It is because of these varied ministries that we need to provide a safe environment for all which promotes and supports their wellbeing. This will include carefully selecting and appointing those who work with children, young people or adults at risk of harm and responding robustly where concerns arise.

Therefore, all clergy, employees and volunteers working with vulnerable groups, including children, must adhere to the Catholic Church's national safeguarding policies, all of which can be found on www.csas.uk.net

This leaflet contains some brief but essential basic safeguarding information. More detailed information can be obtained by all members of the diocese through free online training. To access the EduCare modules, please email Safeguarding@cliftondiocese.com, stating your name, your parish and your role, for instance Steward.

What do We Need to Know when Working with Children?

Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) defines a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, it does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

The Church has a legal and moral duty of care to any child or young person placed in our charge and, quite rightly, parents or carers expect that anyone in a position of trust of children is fully aware of, and adheres to, the Church's national child protection policies. The following checklist will help you however, if you have any doubts or concerns check them out with your Parish Safeguarding Rep or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

The immediate and longer-term impact of child abuse can include anxiety, depression, substance abuse, eating disorders and self-harm, offending and anti-social behaviour. Maltreatment is likely to have a deep impact upon the child's self-image and self-esteem and difficulties may extend into adulthood—in forming or sustaining close relationships, establishing oneself in work or in developing the skills for effective parenthood. It is important to be aware that domestic abuse taking place within a child's home can also have a serious impact on children's safety and welfare and that any concerns should always be reported.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse involves the maltreatment of children - physically, emotionally, sexually or through neglect and can give major long-term effects on all aspects of a child's health, development and wellbeing. Here is a summary of the definitions of the different types of abuse a child may suffer, taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018). We've included these to help you can be alert to signs and indicators that a child or a young person could be a victim of abuse and may turn to you, as someone they trust within the Church, for help.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Certain cultures also practice female genital mutilation which is a severe form of physical abuse and is a crime in the United Kingdom.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include suppressing a child's views, or exploiting, corrupting or radicalising them. It may involve interactions beyond a child's capability or overprotection and limiting the child's development, bullying a child or causing them to be frightened, in some cases by seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another individual. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. They may include physical contact or non-contact activities such as involving children looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images; talking about or watching sexual activities; encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failing to protect a child from harm or danger or failing to ensure access to medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

What do We Need to Know when Working with Adults?

An adult at risk is any person aged 18 years or over who may need care services because of a mental, physical or learning disability, age or illness and who may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves from harm or being exploited.

Personal circumstances and lifestyle may also cause adults to be vulnerable in some situations, either permanently or temporarily. The current circumstances brought about by Covid19 may have brought some unexpected pressures to the fore.

Characteristics to look out for:

People who lack the mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety	People who do not have access to information which could help them or support their need to be independent
People who are physically dependent	People who have low self-esteem or who may be easily influenced
People who are bullied, discriminated against or are the focus of anti-social behaviour	People who have communication difficulties – speech or cognitive impairment
People who are socially isolated	People who have been abused previously

What if a person lacks capacity? How will we know?

You must act in their best interests. Someone lacks capacity if they cannot:

Understand information given to them	Retain that information long enough to be able to make a decision
Weigh up the information sufficiently to make a decision	Communicate their decision

What is our duty of care to adults at risk?

Section 41 of the Care Act 2014 states that if a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a vulnerable adult is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect and is unable to protect him or herself from harm, then the local authority must make whatever enquiries it thinks are necessary to decide whether any action should be taken in the adult's case. The Care Act 2014 recognises that local authorities can only safeguard vulnerable people by working together with the Police, NHS and other key organisations and the wider public.

What if a person does not want you to share their information?

Care Act Guidance states that frontline workers and volunteers should always share their safeguarding concerns with their line manager or safeguarding lead in the first instance, except in emergency situations. The safeguarding principle of proportionality should underpin decisions about sharing information without consent, and decisions should be on a case by case basis.

What is Adult Abuse?

The Office of the Public Guardian states that abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may occur when an adult at risk is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any type of abuse may be perpetrated against an adult at risk as a result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE:

Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, withholding or misuse of medication or aids and inappropriate restraint, confinement or enforced isolation.

Sexual abuse includes sexual acts where an adult has not consented, could not consent to or was coerced into. It may also include non-contact sexual activities, such as voyeurism, viewing or making pornography, indecent exposure and serious or persistent sexual teasing, innuendo or harassment.

Psychological and emotional abuse is included in all other forms of abuse and may involve insults, verbal abuse, shouting and swearing. It arises from a power imbalance in a relationship and the adult at risk is controlled and manipulated, leaving them feeling unworthy, unwanted, unhappy, anxious, insecure, fearful, humiliated and devalued.

Financial or material abuse includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, and the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Discriminatory abuse is an abuser focussing upon an adult's disability (physical, mental health, learning or sensory impairment), race, gender, age, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation, political convictions, appearance, social situation, dependence upon drugs or alcohol.

Domestic abuse is defined as any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or who have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

Institutional abuse can be understood as organisational practices or failings which may place the management or needs of a service above the needs and wishes of a service user. The term 'institution' includes the Church, hospitals, prisons, children's homes or schools, universities, nursing or care homes.

Spiritual abuse can be forcing one's religious beliefs onto a child or vulnerable person; telling someone that God hates them, preventing them from worship, using faith as a weapon to control or terrorize a person for pleasure or gain, using religious teaching to justify abuse (e.g. wives submit to your husbands) or to compel forgiveness.

Neglect and acts of omission include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Advice for Vulnerable Groups including Children

Everyone who comes to a Church service or activity is created in God's image and must be treated according to this Code of Behaviour. Any form of abuse is unacceptable. A poster giving advice and contact details for anyone who has concerns must be displayed on the parish notice board.

In keeping with this statement, all clergy, employees and volunteers working with vulnerable groups, including children, must adhere to the following code of conduct.

Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service – CSAS Code of Conduct of Volunteers

DO:

- Treat all people with dignity and respect.
- Provide an example you wish others to follow.
- Respect people's right to personal privacy.
- Plan activities so that more than one person is present, or at least within sight or hearing of others.
- Follow National Procedures and Guidance (summarised in this booklet and available in full online at www.csasprocedures.uk.net).
- Encourage children, young people and vulnerable adults to feel comfortable pointing out attitudes or behaviours they don't like.
- Remember that others might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.
- Remember that we all have a responsibility to challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse.

DO NOT:

- Permit abusive peer activities (such as name calling, ridiculing, bullying).
- Play physical contact games with children and young people.
- Have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun.
- Render yourself unfit for duty through the consumption of excess alcohol, drugs, prescribed medication or lack of sleep.
- Let suspicion, disclosure or allegations of abuse go unrecorded or unreported.

SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

In an emergency contact the police on 999 Or 101 but there are many more people
who may be able to help, including:

Becky CAWSEY, safeguarding coordinator	Office 0117 954 0993 Mobile 07887 990 385	becky.cawsey@cliftondiocese.com
Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)	020 7901 1920	www.csas.uk.net
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	www.nspcc.org.uk
Childline	0800 1111	www.childline.org.uk
Freephone National Domestic Abuse helpline	0800 200 0247	www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327	www.mensadviceline.org.uk
Women's Aid	0800 2000 247	
Rape Crisis	0808 802 9999	www.rapecrisis.org.uk
Respect phonenumber	0802 802 4040	www.respectphonenumber.org.uk
Galop (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender)	0800 999 5428	www.galop.org.uk
Samaritans Helpline	08457 90 90 90	
Action on Elder Abuse helpline	080 8808 8141	
Age UK	0800 19 6565	www.ageuk.org.uk
Stop it Now Helpline	0800 1000 900	www.stopitnow.org.uk
Internet Safety		www.thinkuknow.co.uk
Child Line	0800 1111	www.childline.org.net
Silver Line (help for older generation)	0800 4 70 80 90	www.silverline.org.uk
Carers	0808 808 7777	www.carersuk.org
Dementia	0800 888 6678	www.dementiauk.org
Mind (Mental Health)	0300 123 3393	www.mind.org.uk

The Safeguarding Page of the Clifton Diocese website also holds additional information regarding support groups that may be of help.

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