

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy



Introduction

The Order of Servite Friars and the Catholic Church in England and Wales are committed to safeguarding, as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church and affirm a 'One Church' approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

The Catholic Church in England and Wales embraces its role in supporting children and adults at risk to achieve their full potential in an environment where they are protected from exploitation, abuse and maltreatment.

We believe that all responsible adults within the Church have a responsibility to act and intervene when it appears that children and adults at risk need to be made safe from harm, whether the risk of harm is neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse or emotional abuse.

The purpose of this policy and the related procedures is to:

- **Protect** children and young people who come into contact with the Servite Friars, either directly or indirectly. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- **Protect** adults at risk who come into contact with the Servite Friars, either directly or indirectly.
- **Provide** those working on behalf of the Servite Friars with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and the protection of children and adults at risk.
- **Support** the creation of a safe, welcoming environment within the Servite Friars.
- **Create** a clear and easy to understand framework and guidance for our workers and volunteers.

The Servite Friars are committed to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all and to sending a strong message that the abuse of children and adults at risk is unacceptable and wrong, and that everyone deserves to live a life free from abuse.

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy is designed by the Prior Provincial and Provincial Council of the Servite Friars. They have a designated friar for Safeguarding matters, one in England and one in Ireland. They have support in both areas from religious order support bodies like RLSS (Religious Life Safeguarding Service).

Who this policy relates to

This policy applies to all workers, including senior managers and the board of trustees, sessional workers, agency staff, students, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of the Servite Friars.

All adults have a responsibility for safeguarding, even if working with children and adults at risk is not part of their day-to-day duties.

Who this policy protects

This policy is intended to protect all children and adults at risk who have contact with the Servite Friars and in the wider community.

This policy applies to children and adults at risk, regardless of disability, ethnic background, religion or belief, sexuality, sex, gender identity, parental status or any other characteristic.

Training

The Order of Servite Friars is committed to ensuring that all adults working with children and adults at risk have access to and are encouraged to engage with appropriate ongoing training and support, as part of their role. Where workers' regular duties bring them into contact with children and adults at risk, some training will be compulsory. This will allow workers to:

- provide high quality and appropriate support to the children and adults at risk that they work with;
- feel confident in their ability to listen to and respond to disclosures of abuse from children and adults at risk;
- feel confident in their ability to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns; and
- feel safe and supported when working with children and adults at risk.

Our intent is that:

All responsible adults within the Servite Friars will attend regular Safeguarding Awareness (Level 1) Training.

All responsible adults who work with children and adults at risk as part of their day-to-day work will attend Safeguarding Alerter (Level 2) Training.

Responsible adults who work with specific groups of children or adults at risk (e.g. Altar Servers) will attend Professional Boundaries training.

We are committed to rolling out training to all workers by March 2026.

Safer Recruitment

Recruitment to all roles, both paid and voluntary, should be carried out in a way that is fair and which has due regard for safeguarding.

- Roles should be advertised widely and with a clear job description and recruitment criteria.
- An application form should be used.
- Candidates should be interviewed by a panel consisting of at least two people.
- Candidates should be assessed against the criteria in the job description.
- The identity of the candidate should be verified at the interview stage.
- References should be obtained and at least one should come from a current or former employer, or someone in a position of responsibility who is not a friend or relative of the applicant. For example, a teacher, probation worker or social worker.
- Candidates should be asked to self-identify any prior convictions.
- The successful candidate should undergo a DBS check as a condition of their employment. Where the worker will have access to children and adults at risk as part of their day-to-day duties, they should undergo an Enhanced DBS check.
- All workers who come into contact with children and adults at risk as part of their day-to-day duties should undergo Level 1 Safeguarding training and this should be repeated on a regular basis (every one-to-two years), to ensure that knowledge is up-to-date.

Record Keeping

The Order of Servite Friars is committed to ensuring that accurate records are kept, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk who come into contact with us.

We hold information about:

- All workers, including Servite Friars and lay staff
- All volunteers
- Students
- Children and adults at risk who take part in certain activities within the Order. For example, Altar Servers and persons attending tuition.

This may include:

- Personal information, such as names, addresses and emergency contact details.
- Information related to employment, including performance and any disciplinary issues.
- Medical information, where this is necessary for the safety of the individual.

In addition, we hold information relating to:

- Safeguarding concerns.
- Incident recording, including any incidents reportable under RIDDOR.

All record keeping **must** comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The principles of GDPR are:

- **Lawfulness, fairness and transparency**

This means that data must be collected, used and stored in a way that is within the law and is fair and that we must share why we collect, use and store data.

- **Purpose limitation**

This means that we must be clear about the purpose of data collection and must only collect data when there is a clear and appropriate reason for doing so.

- **Data minimisation**

This means that we must only collect the data that we need and make every effort to keep data collection to a minimum.

- **Accuracy**

This means that we must make every effort to ensure that the data we collect is accurate and up-to-date and that we have mechanisms in place to correct any inaccuracies.

- **Storage limitation**

This means that we must set limits on how long data is kept for and that we must be transparent about how long data is kept and why

- **Integrity and confidentiality (security)**

This means that we must keep data secure and that we have a responsibility to have clear rules about confidentiality and who is allowed to access data.

- **Accountability**

This means that we must put in place clear measures to ensure that we can be held to account for the data we collect and how we use that data.

Records will be held securely and will be accessible only by those workers with a genuine 'need to know'.

Linked Policies and Procedures

Policies:

- Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Recruitment / HR (DBS, induction, training, etc)
- Disciplinary Policy
- Online Safety / Use of Technology²
- GDPR
- Complaints of this website
- Whistleblowing of this website
- Health and Safety²
- Lone Working²

Other Guidance and Related Documentation:

- The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead: of this website
- Code of Conduct: of Code of Behaviour on this website

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is underpinned by and has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children. This includes:

Legislation:

- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Health and Social Care Act 2012
- The Care Act 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989>
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991²
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/2018/12>
- Human Rights Act 1998 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998>
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003>
- Children Act 2004 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004>
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006>
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012>
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2012
- The Domestic Abuse Bill <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021>

Guidance:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation Risk and Safeguarding](#)
- [Multi-agency Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation](#)
- [Supervision of Activity with Children](#)
- [SEND Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years](#)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

You do not need to read all of this legislation and guidance, unless you wish to do so. You will be provided with the relevant guidance for your role.

Reporting Procedure Abuse Complaints : The person receiving a complaint of abuse shall report it immediately to the Designated Lead Friar (pauladdisonosm@gmail.com) and give a written summary of the report. The Designated Lead Friar, if necessary, shall consult RLSS office for advice. Either through the RLSS office or directly the Designated Lead Friar shall offer response to the complainant and assure action and information. The Designated Lead Friar shall offer the facility of the support agency "Safe Spaces" <https://safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk> to the complainant. National policies and practice guidance for taking and recording disclosures of abuse shall be observed by Servite Friars (Cf. CSSA website <https://catholicsafeguarding.org.uk>).

Support for Survivors or Persons at Risk of Abuse and for Respondents

A complainant shall be assured of a compassionate response together with the offer of support and counselling. Advice and contacts for appropriate counselling for complainants/survivors, from initial disclosure to ongoing support shall be obtained by the Lead Friar from the RLSS office. Those seeking external support services and organisations for survivors or those at risk of abuse should contact SAFE SPACES on <https://safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk> The support must ensure that appropriate, professional care is provided to meet their emotional and psychological needs. For a Respondent, care and support shall be specified by the Designated Lead Friar and agreed with the Respondent's superiors. This may include a requirement for the Respondent to stand down from service, and even take temporary leave of absence by residence in a supervised place. Clearly defined support and appropriate communication shall be ensured and documented. All support shall aim to offer safety and compassion, both for complainants and respondents.

Acknowledgement

"I confirm that I have read and understood the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and related procedures.

I affirm that I am committed to working within this Policy and related procedures."

Name (print)	
Signature	
Date	