



Rosminian Safeguarding Policy UK

For all Members and Employees

Revised September, 2025

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR THE MEMBERS AND MISSION OF THE ROSMINIAN INSTITUTE OF CHARITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

This policy is taken from the National Catholic Safeguarding Policy CSSA 2023

Safeguarding is one of the ways to exercise the love of God between Christians, which we all hope to carry out. Particular care is taken in the safeguarding of children. In all matters of relating to the parishioners or employees at the Houses of Rosminian brethren these matters of Safeguarding will apply. The whole reason for publishing our Safeguarding Policy is to contribute to a culture of continuous improvement in learning and practice.

In all **Parishes** guided by the Rosminian brethren, we follow Diocesan guidelines. We have the local parish Safeguarding coordinator with photo, name and contact details clearly displayed in the church.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The policy and procedure applies to all those who work with the Rosminians whether Religious, voluntary or employed.

All employees and volunteers in leadership will have a copy of these Safeguarding Policies.

The Purpose of this Rosminian Booklet

The Institute of Charity (Rosminians) has been entrusted to guide various Parishes and Centres in the United Kingdom. This booklet assists our Priests and Brothers, and all who are involved in these centres to maintain a safe place for our children and adults at risk. The aim is to provide a clear set of actions for adults to follow when someone brings to their attention, or they themselves observe, concerns about a child or an adult. National procedures are in place to ensure a consistent, timely and person centred response by all adults within the church and all its settings. They relate to all children and young people who have not yet attained their 18th birthday, and adults, who may be at risk of abuse or

neglect and maltreatment. These policies express the determination within the Rosminian Family and the Catholic Church, to take all reasonable steps to ensure that children and adults can participate in the life of the church safely and can be supported and protected where they may be at risk in other settings such as their own homes, at school or in an institutional setting.

1. 0 When there are Allegations against individuals with roles within the Church

This policy is in accordance with article 19 of Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter, "*Vos Estis Lux Mundi*", 7 May 2019. (www.vatican.va)

It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report to the statutory authorities, all allegations of abuse made against those working in the name of the Church, regardless of whether the allegations or concerns relate to a person's behaviour in relation to their role within the Church or another setting.

This policy must be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a member of the Clergy or Religious

Community, lay persons, and volunteers:

- has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or an adult at risk;
- have possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or an adult at risk;
- has behaved towards a child or an adult in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults;
- has behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or adults at risk;
- has behaved in such a way that, by actions or omissions, his or her conduct has been intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a cleric or a religious regarding the above.

These behaviours are to be considered within the context of the different categories of abuse and include sexual, physical and emotional abuse; Also online abuse; sexual exploitation; psychological abuse; financial or material abuse.

For children, this includes:

- having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual or with someone over 16 but under 18 that was groomed into the relationship while still a child (i.e., under 18 years); 'grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence.
- other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature e.g. inappropriate text or e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising etc
- possession of indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of children.

All images that appear to be indecent, nude/semi-nude, or abusive (photographic, digital, or other medium) must always be given to the Police to determine whether they are of children and whether an offence has been committed. A decision about whether the images are of children must not be taken within the Church.

If an adult with capacity explicitly refuses the making

of a referral about abuse that occurred in their childhood, consideration will be given to whether the accused person has access to children who may be at risk. In these circumstances, the name of the accused and details of the allegation will be referred to the statutory authorities, without disclosing the name of the alleged victim where they have refused consent to do so.

1.2. Allegations against an individual who does not hold a role within the church

It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report to statutory authorities where a child or an adult is at immediate risk of harm, or there is concern that a child is suffering or is likely to be suffering from significant harm, from somebody who does not hold a role within the Church.

Concerns about the welfare of a child or young person
Where it is believed that a child would be likely to benefit from family support services, with the agreement of the person who has parental responsibility, it is our policy to refer to the Local Authority Children's Services Department, within 1 working day.

1.3 Reporting Structure and requirements

The Rosminian Board of Trustees has a duty to maintain appropriate governance and oversight of safeguarding in accordance with this policy and national guidelines. Certain functions of the Trustees will be delegated to brethren as follows:

The Provincial is responsible for ensuring appropriate policy, procedures and best practice are in place for the effective delivery of safeguarding, including any related due diligence checks.

The Safeguarding Lead by delegation from the Provincial has direct oversight of Rosminian Safeguarding Policy and guidance, including management and oversight of documentation, case progression/management and the secure storage of safeguarding reports and related material as well as oversight of the relationship with and input in the work of the RLSS.

The Safeguarding Lead may delegate some of this responsibility to the RLSS by referring the case to them, but will remain as key contact for the case duration unless another individual is identified to

assure responsibility.

All clergy, religious, lay employees and volunteers are required to report allegations of abuse, and concerns to the Safeguarding Coordinator within the parish or the Rosminian provincial, who will ensure a referral is made to statutory authorities within 1 working day. If a child or young person, or an adult, is in immediate danger this must be **reported immediately to the Police.**

Regardless of whether the accused person is living or deceased, where it is believed that a criminal offence may have taken place, the allegation must be referred to the Police within one working day.

When a person's conduct towards a child or an adult may impact on their suitability to work with or continue to work with children or adults, the allegation must be referred to the local authority's designated officer for safeguarding of adults within 1 working day.

Where a safeguarding allegation or concern relates to someone who is aged 18 years or over but is still receiving children's welfare services, the matter will be addressed using adult safeguarding arrangements.

1.4. Risk Management

We will work in conjunction with the Diocese and the Religious Life Safeguarding Service.

2. Safer Recruitment Policy

As part of its commitment to ensuring that children, young people and adults are kept safe from harm, the Catholic Church in England and Wales will apply robust selection and appointment processes to anybody who is applying to work or minister within the Church in a role which gives them direct access to children or adults at risk or who may be otherwise vulnerable.

Reliance on a practice of untested trust is insufficient and Church bodies must adhere to the highest standards of practice and public accountability, while continuing to foster a spirit of trust and openness that reflects the values of the Church.

As part of the recruitment process, an application or personal details form must be completed by all those seeking to work with children and adults at risk or who

may be otherwise vulnerable, and two references (including the current employer for paid positions) must be sought and provided.

For paid posts, a formal interview must be conducted and for unpaid posts, the prospective volunteer must participate in a formal discussion.

Roles working or ministering directly with children and adults at risk or may be otherwise vulnerable, will be checked for eligibility for a DBS Disclosure, and where eligible the Disclosure Certificate must be obtained before the person commences in role.

Anyone who is seeking to work with children or adults whether in a paid or unpaid capacity must be provided with the opportunity to self-disclose relevant conviction information.

For volunteers, relevant convictions will not need to be disclosed in advance or during the formal discussion about the role but must be discussed with the volunteer applicant before a decision about appointment is made.

The Rosminian superior of the parish or ministry must

satisfy himself that the paid or voluntary appointee is legally entitled to work in the UK.

3.0 DBS Processing

The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) is registered with the DBS on behalf of the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

The local Diocese or the Safeguarding Lead, will carry out the necessary DBS Disclosure Applications and the Diocesan Safeguarding Office will always be the judge of necessity or otherwise.

3.1 *Supervision of children*

Statutory guidance on supervising activity with children, which is regulated activity when unsupervised can be found in government publications: Supervision of activity with children

3.2 Seminarians and Religious in Formation
Disclosures for Seminarians and Religious in Formation will be undertaken according to the national safeguarding policy.

4. Disputes relating to information disclosed on the DBS Disclosure

In the event that information is presented on the Disclosure Certificate which the applicant believes is inaccurate or wrongly appropriated to their identity, the applicant should raise this initially with the parish Safeguarding coordinator, or the person of the voluntary Society, who asked the applicant to undertake a Disclosure.

The decision in relation to religious members rests with the Provincial who is responsible for the appointment.

The decision to appoint volunteers generally rests with the parish priest who will take local advice.

5. Whistleblowing Policy and Safeguarding matters

5.1 Introduction

People who work within the Catholic Church in England and Wales, employees, office holders or Volunteers, are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the Church. They may not, however, express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Church. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may feel easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice.

This whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable anyone with a serious concern, to raise concerns without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

5.2 Defining Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is a term used to refer to the internal or external disclosure of malpractice as well as illegal acts, or omissions, at work.

Policy Statement

The Dioceses and Religious Congregations of the Catholic Church in England and Wales are committed to:

- conducting themselves ethically, with honesty and integrity
- the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability;
- good practice and high standards regardless of role within the Church, and
- want to be supportive of employees, office holders and Volunteers.

It is recognised that this might not always be achieved, and that genuine and serious concerns might need to be raised through this whistleblowing policy.

In line with these commitments, employees, office holders, volunteers and others who have serious concerns, are encouraged to come forward and voice concerns about safeguarding practice. It is recognised that some cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

The Rosminian Congregation recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of repercussion from those responsible for the failure or malpractice.

The Catholic Church will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when a concern is raised in good faith.

Aim of the policy

This policy aims to encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice;

- provide an effective way for concerns to be raised;
- ensure that feedback is received by the person raising serious concerns, on any action undertaken because of the concerns being raised;
- provide reassurance about protection from possible reprisals or victimisation if concerns are raised in good faith.

Scope of the policy

The policy will apply equally, and with equal confidentiality to any workers within the Church, including employees, volunteers and office holders, making qualifying disclosures about safeguarding matters within a diocese or religious congregation.

The section below details the types of concerns that can be raised under this policy.

5.3 Protecting individuals using this policy

The Public Interest Disclosure Act amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 and it provides protection for individuals who raise concerns about specified matters, outlined below. These are known as qualifying disclosures.

A qualifying disclosure is one made in good faith by an individual who has a reasonable belief that the following is being, has been or is likely to be committed:

- a criminal offence (including fraudulent and corrupt behaviour, such as theft, fraud or malpractice);
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation, or
- concealment of any of the above.;

It is not necessary to have proof that such an act is being, has been or is likely to be committed. However, the worker must have a reasonable belief that the information shows that one of the categories of wrongdoing listed in the legislation has occurred or is likely to occur, and the concern must be raised in the correct way. If a protected disclosure is made, the person making the disclosure has the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised.

5.4 Untrue or Malicious Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation

frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, action may be taken against you in accordance with the relevant organisational policy and procedure.

5.5 Non-Whistleblowing Concerns

This policy is only to be used in the circumstances outlined above. There will be other diocesan, or Rosminian policies and procedures that will be relevant in other circumstances. This may include, but is not limited to:

- management of concerns relating to children;
- management of concerns relating to adults at risk;
- grievance;
- disciplinary;
- harassment and bullying;

5.6 How to Raise a Concern

You should raise your whistleblowing concern as soon as possible. Early reporting can make it easier to act and resolve any problems.

Your concern can be made in writing or verbally. A written account is preferable because it can make managing the process more efficient and effective.

Your account of concerns should include:

- any relevant background and context;
- dates, times, names and venues;
- a description of the concern and why the situation caused concern.

When raising a concern, it must be stated if the concern is being raised using the whistleblowing policy and if the identity of the person raising the concern is to be kept confidential. Whilst every effort will be made to deal with concerns confidentially, this may not always be possible. If concerns cannot be dealt with anonymously then the person raising the concern must be informed and provided with the reasons why.

Anonymous disclosures will be considered but are discouraged because anonymity can make it difficult to investigate, protect those concerned, or provide feedback on outcomes.

Who should concerns be raised with?

Generally, concerns should always be raised with the person to whom the person making the complaint is accountable, in the first instance, the parish priest or the parish Safeguarding representative or the Rosminian superior, or the provincial. Concerns about Safeguarding Lead should be referred to the Fr Provincial. Concerns about Fr Provincial should be referred to the Provost General.

Concerns relating to a parish Safeguarding Representative should be referred to the Safeguarding Coordinator of the Diocese.

If you are not sure who to contact, either due to not knowing who fills the above-named roles, or to the seriousness or sensitivity of the issue, or the identity of the individual who is suspected of malpractice, you should seek advice from the RLSS.

5.7 Response to Concerns Raised

The action taken by the Diocese, or the Rosminian Congregation will depend upon the nature of your

concerns. Remember that testing out your concerns is not the same as either accepting or rejecting them. The matters raised may be subject to referral to the statutory authorities (Police or Social Care Services);

Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of the 'Responding to allegations and concerns' procedures will be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required, this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

If you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, you should consult with your employer in relation to advice about procedure and support arrangements.

The Diocese or Rosminian Congregation accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal

constraints, they will inform you of the outcome of any investigation.

If you are not satisfied with the way your concern has been managed you should refer to the Bishop or the Rosminian safeguarding representative.

6. Principles of Best Practice

As a Rosminian, or parish volunteer, you must:
Operate within the Church's principles and guidance and any particular procedures of the Diocese.

Treat all children, young people and adults equally and with respect; Engage and interact appropriately with children, young people and adults;

Respect a child, young person's or adult at risk right to personal privacy; Challenge unacceptable behaviour and provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow - an environment which allows bullying, inappropriate shouting or any form of discrimination is always unacceptable;

Recognise that particular care is required in moments

when you are discussing sensitive issues with children, young people and adults e.g. maintain appropriate boundaries.

Avoid situations that compromise your relationship with children, young people and adults, and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust. This rule should apply to all such behaviours including those which would not constitute an illegal act.

6.1 Parish or Centre Activities

To ensure that all those who use the parish premises are doing so in a safe environment.

The nature of church premises and those who work in them should give a sense of safety and security; for this reason even when church premises are being used by individuals or groups not normally associated with them, church authorities have a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe and secure environment. These activities or events may include:

Preparation for the Sacraments, Children's Liturgy,

Youth Groups, Prayer Meetings, Fundraising Events, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and all services. Consult the www.churchsafety.org.uk website to assist in Risk Assessment of your church premises and procedures.

6.2 Purpose, Policy and Questions for Safe Procedure

It is essential to work through the following checklist for all activities involving children, young people and adults on church premises:

Who is the named person who has overall responsibility for the activity and for completing this checklist? Has appropriate approval been obtained from the Parish Priest or his representative? Who is responsible for undertaking an appropriate risk assessment?

Are existing insurance arrangements adequate for the activities?

Have leaders been recruited and trained in accordance with National Policy? Have leaders and

helpers been **DBS checked** and are they properly prepared for the activity?

Is there a registration procedure for those who will be present at the event? If children are taking part, do those with parental responsibility understand the procedures for “dropping off” and “collecting” children? Is a consent form required for the activity? Is the activity being held in a public place? Are appropriate measures in place if children, young people or adults are to have access to computers as part of the activity? Are the appropriate safeguards in place? If photographs are to be taken are consent forms signed?

Is the event to include the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Where diocesan safeguarding must be carefully followed.

7.0 The Eight Safeguarding Standards by which each Community is self-assessed, and the Congregation will be assessed by the CSSA

1. Safeguarding is embedded in the Rosminian leadership, governance, ministry and culture

2. Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message
3. Engaging with and Caring for those who report having been harmed
4. Effective Management of Allegations and Concerns
5. Management and Support of Subjects of Allegations and Concerns (Respondents)
6. Robust Human Resource Management
7. Training and Support for Safeguarding for all Rosminians
8. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

7.1 Quality Assurance is based upon:

- A. National and organisational standards that may already be in place
- B. Considers whether the work is helping, having a positive impact and is promoting the best outcomes possible
- C. Ensures that work is effective and of a high standard
- D. Ensures that you are putting in place actions to manage and reduce risks

- E. Identifies what needs to be adapted or changed to improve safeguarding practice and outcomes for the people you work with
- F. Allows opportunity to learn from any mistakes and acknowledge achievements;
- G. Provides a balance between challenge and support;
- H. Relies on looking at a range of sources of evidence that enables us to reach decisions about safeguarding practice within your group
- J. Has more than one method of audit or quality assurance activity
- K. Considers the lived experience of children and adults.

7.2 The Self Assessment and CSSA Assessment Tools

Ask these questions of the first Standard

1.1 Do the Rosminians have a written Safeguarding Policy?

1.2 If yes, do you have a policy implementation plan?
Does this define an individual's role in delivering the

plan? When was this last reviewed or updated and is there a clear expectation of the next review date?

1.3 Do Rosminians have a designated safeguarding representative?

1.4 Are Rosminian leaders aware of the basic principles of safeguarding? Do they understand their role and responsibilities in creating a safe environment?

1.5 Do all Rosminians understand their contribution to safeguarding?

1.6 Is safeguarding on the agenda of every Provincial Council and trustee meeting? If not, when was it last discussed

1.7 How do you understand that RLSS will support you with your safeguarding work?

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For further information please see

religious life safeguarding service: RLSS:
www.religioussafeguarding.org

catholic safeguarding standards agency: CSSA
www.catholic safeguarding.org.uk

Help Organisations

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre 0800 783 2187
Young People's freephone 0845 120 2948
Parentline Plus 08088 002222
Youth Access 020 8772 9900

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