**Safeguarding in our Parishes**

**Reporting abuse**

If you are concerned about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, do not delay in contacting the police, using 999 if a child or adult is believed to be in immediate danger.

It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report all allegations of abuse to statutory authorities, regardless of whether the abuse occurred recently or in the past, or whether the accused person is living or deceased.

If you are in any role within the Catholic Church in England and Wales**,** you must refer allegations directly to the safeguarding office for your diocese or religious congregation, or directly to the Police.

If you are a member of the public**,** please refer allegations directly to the police and also to the safeguarding office in your diocese; (the relevant Diocesan safeguarding office can be located using the interactive map on the links page of the CSAS website [www.csas.uk.net](http://www.csas.uk.net/) – contact details will be shown when you click on the relevant area of the map). You can also contact CSAS by telephoning 0207 901 1920 or via email at admin@csas.uk.net

**Safeguarding in Our Parishes**

The Catholic Church in England and Wales is striving towards a culture of safeguarding where all are safe from harm and abuse and where every person is encouraged and enabled to enjoy the fullness of life in Jesus Christ through the prayerful, caring, nurturing, supportive and protective endeavours of the Catholic community, both individually and collectively. (Source: CSAS)

The Catholic Church and its individual members will undertake appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all, by practising fully and positively Christ’s Ministry towards children, young people and adults and responding sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm. This is demonstrated by the provision of carefully planned activities for children, young people and adults, caring for those hurt by abuse and ministering to and robustly managing those who have caused harm. (Source: CSAS)

Read more about CSAS [here](https://www.csas.uk.net/more-about-safeguarding-in-the-catholic-church/)

Across the 215 parishes of Westminster Diocese there are currently about 275 PSRs (Parish Safeguarding Representatives) who are parishioners with a variety of professional backgrounds and who very generously volunteer in this role by offering some of their time and expertise to help with the implementation of good safeguarding practices. The role is performed with the ongoing support of the diocesan central safeguarding team; together and mutually, PSRs, the central safeguarding team and the parish priests aim at keeping everyone safe from harm and abuse with a particular focus on vulnerable groups (children and adults at risk).

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility if we wish to contribute to a better society for all.

**Who is who?**

**PSR (Parish Safeguarding Representative)**
There are four main areas of a PSR’s role and they include:

• **Safer Recruitment:**

To ensure that the most appropriate “Safer recruitment” procedures for all individuals who wish to volunteer for a parish are implemented at all times. This includes interviewing, collecting references and the initial stages of DBS applications (Disclosure Barring Service) where it is a legal requirement to work in regulated activities with children and adults at risk, ID verification process and more.
The PSR – by liaising with the parish priest and activity leaders – can directly and safely recruit new volunteers or indirectly support the leaders of activities in the parish to do so (e.g. recruitment of new catechists).

• **Safer Environments:**

To help creating a safer environment at parish level for safe parish activities to take place at all times; this includes adults/children ratios, correct and safe use of technology, DBS processing as a few examples but it is much more.
The PSR is supported in the task of creating a safer environment through the CSAS (Catholic Advisory Safeguarding Services) website https://www.csas.uk.net/ and the central safeguarding team.

• **Disclosures:**

To be the “first point of contact”, to recognize, respond, record and report (4 Rs) in the initial phase of a disclosure received about a concern in both church and non-church related matters. PSRs are trained about the collection of information required that will be passed in a timely fashion to the central safeguarding team which will assess these further; the team at the central safeguarding office possesses the professional skills and necessary sensitivity required in dealing with such occurrences especially when applying correct confidentiality procedures.

• **A Culture of Safeguarding:**

To spread a so called “Culture of Safeguarding” across the catholic church by encouraging as many members of each community as possible to enroll in online EduCare safeguarding modules which are free to all its members. This invitation to learn should enable more individuals to acquire some basic but fundamental knowledge that aims at informing people about the core safeguarding objective, raising awareness and in turn trying reduce the risk of harm and abuse from happening in the first place.

To deliver safeguarding training to all volunteers of their parish especially those involved in regulated activities with children and adults at risk. This includes providing volunteers with safeguarding literature about types of abuse, how to respond to concerns, details of organisations which work to help surviving victims of abuse and more.

[Catholic Safeguarding Structure](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/National-Safeguarding-Structure.pdf)

[Educare Courses & Registration](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Educare-poster-A5-size-x2.pdf)

Resources

[Hurt by Abuse?](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Hurt-by-Abuse.pdf)

[Alpha Card](https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ALPHA-CARD.pdf)

**How to contact a PSR?**

PSRs are the first point of contact at the parish for all safeguarding queries. They are reachable for matters that do not imply an immediate danger to a child or adult at risk, in which case the police should be contacted on 999. There should be a **safeguarding poster** hanging in visible and relevant areas of the parish with the parish PSR’s name, surname and a dedicated email address where to direct your query. If this is not visible, please do contact the parish to obtain the PSR’s name and safeguarding email address please.

PSRs should access and check this account on a regular basis (at least once a week). If your PSR for any reason is not reachable and you do have a safeguarding matter that requires attention please do not hesitate to contact the diocesan central safeguarding team (see below).

**Parish Priest**

The parish priest is a key figure who is responsible to liaise with his team of PSRs to ensure that the parish environment embraces a culture of safeguarding where all members of its community, with particular care for the vulnerable, can enjoy their activities safe from harm and abuse in all circumstances.

**Diocesan Central Safeguarding Team**

The Diocesan central safeguarding team is based in Vaughan House (behind Westminster Cathedral) and is responsible to deal with all safeguarding matters in the Diocese of Westminster. The team manages and correctly directs disclosures to the most appropriate agencies, safely recruits and trains PSRs, provides safeguarding training information/access to the wider Catholic community, processes DBS, performs parish safeguarding visits, meets regularly with all PSRs to refresh safeguarding provision and build on a more direct and personal relationships and present and future collaborations.

Below are the current team members who can be contacted Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm:

* **Safeguarding Coordinator**

**Ms. Geraldine Allen (Team Manager)**

**020 7798 9350  email: geraldineallen@rcdow.org.uk**

* **Safeguarding Officers (Allegations & Concerns)**

**Ms. Rebecca Williams**

**020 7798 9096 email: rebeccawilliams@rcdow.org.uk**

**Ms. Sarah Robinson**

**020 7798 9186 email: sarahrobinson@rcdow.org.uk**

**Ms. Natalie Creswick**

**020 7798 9359  email: nataliecreswick@rcdow.org.uk**

* **Safeguarding Support Officer (PSRs support)**

**Ms. Arianna Sommariva**

**020 7798 9358  email: ariannasommariva@rcdow.org.uk**

* **DBS Administrator (DBS applications)**

**Ms. Jackie Krobo**

**020 7798 9352  email: jackiekrobo@rcdow.org.uk**

* **PA to Safeguarding Coordinator (Team PA and EduCare Administrator)**

**Mr. Gabriele Sedda**

**020 7798 9356  email: gabrielesedda@rcdow.org.uk**

**PSR Safeguarding Conferences 2020 details now available on PSR resource centre and SG email’s**