



Safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults policy

“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.”

(National Catholic Safeguarding Commission)

Welcome to theASCENT UK Safeguarding Policy.

The wellbeing of children and young people is of paramount importance to theASCENT UK, and at all times the ministry acts in consideration of what is in the best interests of the child. The ministry insists that child protection and safeguarding generally is the responsibility of **all** adults who work and volunteer on theASCENT.

The purpose of this document is to ensure that the highest level of safeguarding is applied consistently across all events and locations of theASCENT UK. The members of theASCENT Steering Group established by CREW Trust hold responsibility for safeguarding and have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who works with a team of location safeguarding representatives (LSRs) to implement and adhere to the contents of this policy and other national and governmental safeguarding policies.

theASCENT UK policy was first written in 2018 and is reviewed annually in April for presentation and approval of theASCENT Core Director Team, before being used for wider team training in September. If you have any questions or concerns about this policy please email the DSL at safeguarding@theascentuk.co.uk.

This policy has been written with the guidance of the National Safeguarding Policy of the Catholic Church of England and Wales – that policy can be found at <https://www.csas.uk.net/procedures-manual/>.

The Catholic Church recognises the personal dignity and rights of all Vulnerable People towards whom it has a special responsibility. The Church and individual members of it undertake to take all appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all and to practice fully and positively Christ's Ministry towards children, young people and vulnerable adults and to respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm. (CSAS)

theASCENT UK believes that all people are created in the image and likeness of God (CCC 1701) and we are committed to upholding each person's dignity. We also recognise that we have an additional duty of care towards children and vulnerable adults.



Will Desmond theASCENT UK Founder



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theASCENT UK

1:1 What is theASCENT UK?

theASCENT is a three year discipleship process for Catholic young people aged 14-19 who want to embrace their faith in Jesus Christ at a whole new level and learn how to share it with others. First launched in 2013 at the Sion Catholic Community for Evangelism, the process is currently run in three locations around the UK and is led by a competent team of volunteers who give over 15,000 hours of their time a year to support the young people in their discipleship journeys. At our heart we seek to disciple the few for the sake of the many so that the Gospel may reach the ends of the earth.

1:2 Vision, values & purpose of theASCENT UK

OUR VISION

Is to see a movement of Spirit filled disciples, who are united in following Jesus minute by minute and living out their God-given purpose.

OUR PURPOSE

Is to raise up disciples in the heart of the Church.

OUR MISSION

Is to provide a discipleship journey featuring retreats, small groups and mentoring, which empowers young Catholics to pray, step into their God-given identity and impact their localities with the Gospel.

OUR VALUES - the flavour and culture of how we lead and minister

TEACHABILITY	WATCHFULNESS	INTENTIONALITY
Enables us to learn...	Provokes us to pray...	Leads us to go...
"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me." Mt 11:29	"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." Mt 26:41	"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" Mt 28:19

1:3 Principles and aims of the ASCENT UK safeguarding policy

Principles

In order to ensure the ASCENT UK is 'creating a safe environment' (CSAS, 2018) within its ministry, in-person and online, the ASCENT UK works to ensure:

1. That the safety, welfare and dignity of children and vulnerable adults is maintained at all times.
2. That appropriate training is provided, either 'in-house' or via outside providers, in areas of safeguarding, children's ministry, youth ministry and prayer ministry.
3. That the Designated Safeguarding Lead, location safeguarding representatives and location leads work in co-operation with outside agencies; in particular the appropriate diocesan safeguarding coordinator, the police and social services as required.
4. That they and those with responsibility for events/organisations/communities adhere to the safeguarding policy and its appendices as outlined in this document.
5. That all children, young people and vulnerable adults shall have equal opportunities to participate in children's events, regardless of race, sex, faith, sexual orientation or ability.
6. That where a child, young person or vulnerable adult may need additional support due to a disability or illness additional support will be sought within the team or negotiate support with the parent or carer.

Aims

1. To provide all team members with the necessary guidelines/training to enable them to meet their responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
2. To ensure safe and consistent practice across locations.
3. To support team members in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities.
4. To ensure the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults are met, particularly during prayer ministry and mentorship.

1:4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Steering Group of the ASCENT UK, established by CREW Trust, is responsible for setting the criteria and role description for the position of the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They are responsible for appointing the Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensuring their criteria are met and the person is appropriate for the role.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibilities should include:

1. Updating or reviewing the ASCENT safeguarding policy annually (or re-writing if needed)
2. Being the lead person responsible for cascade and implementation of the ASCENT safeguarding policy
3. Remain up to date with safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults at a local, national and Governmental level
4. Identification and implementation of appropriate level 3 safeguarding training for team leaders, safeguarding leaders, and team pastors.
5. Identification and implementation of appropriate module training for all team members.
6. Identification and implementation of in-house training at team training weekend.
7. Maintaining accurate records of training attendance and renewal dates
8. Ensuring all team members hold an up to date enhanced DBS that is registered to update online yearly
9. The managing and supervision of location safeguarding representatives

The Designated Safeguarding Lead needs to remain up to date with relevant safeguarding policy and procedure and with the following documents:

“Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018”

<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>

Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)

<https://www.csas.uk.net/procedures-manual/>

The safeguarding lead is accountable to the Steering Group of the ASCENT UK.

1:5 The location safeguarding representative (LSR)

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, with support from the steering group as needed, to appoint an appropriate safeguarding representative for each the ASCENT location to carry out the following responsibilities:

1. Responsible to the DSL for the ASCENT UK
2. To be the responsible safeguarding person for the location
3. Supporting the DSL in the cascade and implementation of the ASCENT safeguarding policy
4. Ensuring that all members of the location team are aware of the role of the LSR, how to contact their LSR – both at events and in between events

5. Ensuring that all young people and parents from their locality know the name and contact information of their LSR and their role in theASCENT
6. Be present at each 'in person' or 'online' theASCENT event for the purposes of support for team members, parents/carers and young people
7. Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns about a child who takes part in theASCENT's activities
8. Is responsible for working closely with location pastors to determine if/when pastoral concerns become safeguarding concerns
9. Leading on responding to any safeguarding concerns relating to any young person and/or team member and working directly with Diocesan (both location diocese and participant diocese) safeguarding officers and statutory services (police, children's services) as appropriate
10. Working directly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead when concerns arise for support and direction and to ensure that theASCENT and national policy is followed.
11. To engage in regular safeguarding supervision with the Designated Safeguarding Lead – this can be done 1:1 or as a group of location safeguarding representatives.
12. To work with the DSL to ensure all team members implement the module training and yearly basic safeguarding and scenario discussions at annual team training
13. To support DSL to ensure all team members have enhanced DBS and work towards all DBS being registered on line

The location safeguarding representatives need to remain up to date with relevant safeguarding policy and procedure and with the following documents:

“Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018”

<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/>

Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)

<https://www.csas.uk.net/procedures-manual/>

For further role terminology of theASCENT team, [please see here.](#)

2: SAFEGUARDING

2:1 Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

theASCENT UK recognises that safeguarding is **everybody's responsibility** (Working together to safeguard Children, 2018) and that we have a legal obligation – under the Children Act (1989, 2004) – as well as a moral obligation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to protect children and vulnerable adults from acts of neglect, physical, emotional, sexual or any form of abuse and to provide for them a safe environment.

2:2 Safeguarding terminology & definitions

Child

The legal definition of a child is a young person under the age of 18.
(Children Act 1989, 2004)

Adult at risk

An “Adult at Risk” is defined as any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation. These events may include adults outside of this definition but who are vulnerable for other reasons.

Child Protection

While “safeguarding” is an umbrella term that incorporates child protection, child protection is the process undertaken to fulfil statutory obligations to respond to – and protect – those children who have been identified as suffering from, or are at risk of, harm through abuse. There are multiple recognised forms of abuse that are categorised within the following five definitions:¹

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse of a child may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical

¹ Department for Education (2018) Working together to safeguard children. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> (Accessed: 11 July 2021).

harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child they are looking after.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. These activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet or mobile communication). Sexual abuse may not necessarily involve a high level of violence and can be committed by men, women or other children.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development and health. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless and unloved, that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. This form of abuse may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. Emotional abuse can involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger. Emotional abuse can also involve the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is 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, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment),
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);

- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Spiritual

In the context of working with Children, young people and vulnerable adults in a Church/Religious setting it is pertinent to recognise the risk of Spiritual abuse. Spiritual abuse can be defined as, "coercion and control of one individual or another by another in a spiritual context. The target experiences this as a deeply emotional personal attack. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements of secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of scripture or using the pulpit to control behaviour, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation from others, especially from those external to the abusive context" (Oakley 2013 in Oakley & Kimmond, 2013 p21).

The risk of children, young people and vulnerable adults experiencing Spiritual Abuse can only be minimised by the thorough vetting of all team members - including those who do not have contact with the children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in the ASCENT - via the safer recruitment process. It is the location lead's responsibility to determine and monitor the good standing and theology of any outside guests/speakers/organisations and ensure the risk of extreme views, contradictory to Church teaching and/or UK law, are not held by these individuals.

Awareness of Current Issues

As lifestyles change and technology advances we need to update on current trends which might be involved in creating safeguarding issues for young people.

Some current trends (as of November 2021) include:

- Private fostering where young people are left with friends or relatives (eg. because parents have to travel for long distances for work or family demands). This could provide an unsafe temporary home environment.
- Consensual relationships where the young person willingly enters relationships or liaisons with people their own age or older where they can be exploited.
- Trends in social media change quickly and with it the safeguarding of young persons compromised, it is therefore important to keep abreast of these changes and how they can impact young persons.

Confidentiality

Where an issue may arise all team members are required to understand that information concerning the safeguarding of an individual warrants a high degree level of confidentiality, not only to protect the individual, but also to ensure that any information disclosed does not compromise evidence that may be used in future legal proceedings.

2:3 Relevant documents

Documents identified that have influenced this policy:

1. Working together to safeguard Children (Department for Education, updated 2018)
2. Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (The Charity Commission, updated 2019)
3. Creating a safe environment (Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service, updated 2018)

2:4 DBS checks and references

Adults working with theASCENT UK should hold an enhanced DBS certificate, preferably registered online – for ease of regular updates on individuals criminal status.

theASCENT UK requires that all adult team members working directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults have a valid DBS check and provide details of two referees – preferably a parish priest and a character reference from someone who as know the team member for at least 2 years but is not related to the individual. References should be checked for all team members. Checking for compliance and taking up references is the responsibility of the administrator for theASCENT UK and the logistics location leads.

2:5 Position of trust

Those who serve on theASCENT UK should understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for an adult or a child, laity, clergy or religious over 16 to engage in sexual activities (physically, emotionally, in person or online) towards a child, where the offender is in a position of trust in respect to the child, even if the child is over 16 and the behaviour is consensual.

theASCENT UK recognises that close friendships can form between family groups particularly within organisations and communities, It also recognises that these friendships may include those that serve and those that attend events. We do not wish to limit this; however, care must be taken by all team members when using social media. Team members should NOT give out their contact details or accept as a

friend/follower on social media any delegate under the age of 18 years old. In order to limit misunderstanding and increase transparency it is theASCENT UK policy that all team members hold an @theascentuk.co.uk email address and all communication with parents/carers and young people, where possible, should be carried out via this email address.

2:6 Whistle blowing

theASCENT UK is committed to a deeply embedded culture of Safeguarding. This includes acknowledging the possibility that allegations may arise against its team members. An allegation is any information which indicates that a team member may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may harm a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Behaved towards a child, young person or vulnerable adult in such a way that would indicate that they pose a risk of harm
- Possibly committed a criminal act against or relating to a child, young person or vulnerable adult

All team members, parents/carers/young people should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in safeguarding procedures. These concerns/issues should be brought to the attention of the location safeguarding representative (LSR) who may be able to address these issues immediately. The LSR will then pass concerns – even if the issue has been resolved – on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will keep a confidential record of the concern. Should concerns reflect the practice of the location lead or cohort lead, the team member should discuss this concern directly with the location safeguarding representative, who will then decide appropriate action.

All allegations of abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult must be reported to statutory authorities in accordance with the national safeguarding policies and procedures of the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

If an allegation is made against a team member, the location safeguarding representative MUST be informed immediately and s/he speak with the appropriate diocesan safeguarding co-ordinator or appropriate professional body before any further action is taken with regards to next steps and removal from ministry – at the earliest opportunity the LSR will report to the DSL for theASCENT UK. The identity of the person making the allegation is to be protected while an enquiry is conducted. The DSL will ask the person making the allegation to make a written record (signed and dated) of their concern. If that person is a child, their parent/carer must also be present. The DSL should only ascertain the basic facts of the allegation. Any in depth enquiry should be conducted by relevant authorities in line with stated procedures.

If further enquiry is needed, the relevant authorities should be contacted. This will include local police and the Safeguarding Team of the diocese where the event is being held, or where the organisation/community is based.

Any allegation made against a team member – even if after initial enquiry it is agreed by ALL to be a misunderstanding – should be reported to the DSL for theASCENT UK.

The recipient of an allegation MUST NOT unilaterally determine its validity but should report it in line with stated procedures.

2:7 Security, health & safety

A full risk assessment of each location and/or online event must be undertaken by the location logistics lead and reviewed and updated prior to each event. The risk assessments must be held on file.

All those who serve at theASCENT UK events are responsible for helping keep the events venue secure – online and in person events. Team members must adhere to security measures in place for each location.

If there are concerns for the security of the location/social media platform and it is feared that harm is possible the logistics lead must make appropriate use of the relevant emergency services.

Location leads must keep a record of all disciplinary matters, health and accident reports and any complaints relating to the emotional or developmental welfare of participants.

2:8 Guidelines for good practice in ministry with children and young people

theASCENT UK location leads strive to avoid situations which could lead to difficulties either of misunderstanding or even accusations of misconduct. It is best practice to ensure that team members chaperone each other as appropriate and as needed.

- Location leads should ensure that an adequate ratio of adults to children/ young people is maintained – see page16 for ratios.
- Location leads should ensure that for any activities away from the normal meeting place, they have written parental consent for the child to leave the normal meeting place and the event leader knows where the group is working.
- Location leads should try to maintain an adequate sex balance within the team.
- Location leads should ensure that inexperienced team members benefit from clear guidance and supervision.

- Location leads should ensure that all team members know what to do in the case of suspected or alleged abuse.
- Location leads should ensure that team members know how to summon help, obtain first aid and know where fire extinguishers, alarms and emergency exits are located.

3: Prayer Ministry

3: Prayer Ministry Guidelines

3:1 Introduction

theASCENT UK recognises that every person is made in the image and likeness of God. We therefore make every effort to protect and promote the dignity and welfare of all young people and team members. We are committed to safeguarding in all its aspects.

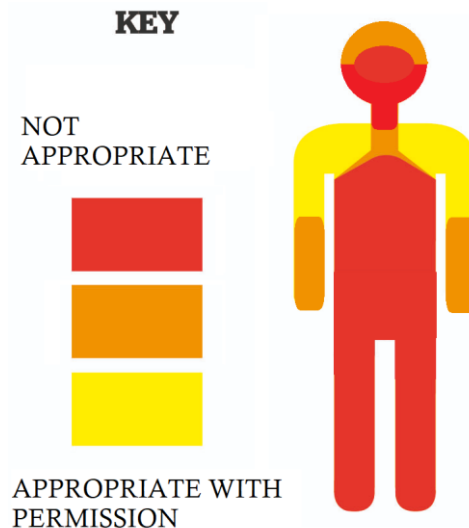
As part of theASCENT UK events, it is usual to offer delegates the opportunity to receive prayer from a team pair or an individual should they want it. Responding to this opportunity is always entirely optional.

3:2 Organising the prayer ministry team

The “prayer lead”² will oversee times of ministry and ensure all team members are adequately trained and supported.

- Team members should, whenever possible, pray in pairs with individuals. Ideally these pairs should consist of one person of each sex, although we recognise that this is not always possible.
- Where praying pairs are of one sex, they should only pray with delegates of the same sex.
- No one is to minister to anyone of the opposite sex alone (unless parent, spouse, sibling or own child).
- Under 18’s are only to be ministered to if they themselves and parent/carer or an adult responsible has given consent
- Concerns or allegations must be reported to location safeguarding rep

² For further role terminology of theASCENT team, [please see here.](#)



3:3 Confidentiality

Members of theASCENT UK team should be sensitive to information that young people/team members may share with them during prayer ministry. However, if a team is asked if they can share an issue with them in complete confidence, the team member should gently make it clear that they cannot promise this, as they may need to share information with the location safeguarding representative if needed. If information of a criminal nature is shared, the team member may need to report this to a member of the location leads team. If the issue concerns safeguarding, information must be given to the location safeguarding representative who will then contact the most appropriate professional agency (ie diocesan safeguarding coordinator, police, social services).

Guidance on prayer ministry can be found in Appendix A.

4: RESIDENTIAL EVENTS

It is recognised that attending retreats and spiritual events can be of significant importance in the faith journey of a person and this includes children, young people and vulnerable adults. These guidelines are set as guidance for location leads, cohort leads and all team members to ensure the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults attending a theASCENT residential event without the presence of a person who holds parental responsibility or a carer.

These guidelines are written to be used in conjunction with and knowledge of this safeguarding policy and are rooted in and informed by:

- Creating a safe environment 2018 Working together to safeguarding children 2018

- Safeguarding children and young people online – a guide for practitioners (Claudia Megele 2018)

4:1 Location safeguarding representatives

Each location of the ASCENT UK has a safeguarding representative who will have undertaken approved safeguarding training via their diocese, group and/or work environment where appropriate accredited training is given – they are accountable to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Steering Group of the ASCENT UK.

4:2 Priests serving at residential events outside of their own diocese/order

Any priest attending an event of the ASCENT UK outside their own diocese is required to hold an enhanced DBS and their diocesan celebret³ – both must be shown to the location safeguarding representative.

Any priest who cannot provide a celebret cannot attend the event.

The diocesan safeguarding officer or Bishop in whose diocese the event is occurring must be informed of the event and asked if they require a list of attending priests

Any priest from outside England & Wales must complete ‘testimonial of suitability’ (Appendix B).

This form must be:

- completed by the priest’s bishop or leader of his religious order or equivalent
- Dated to cover the duration of the event or dated for a period of 1 year if the member of clergy is in ongoing ministry and will be renewed every 12 months.
- Stamped with the official seal of the diocese or order

4:3 Ensuring a safe environment

Each team member and/or visitor staying overnight at the location in the same building with children, young people or vulnerable adults will hold an enhanced DBS.

Any person without a DBS must not be resident in the building and must be accompanied by a member of the team, identified by the location safeguarding representative, at all times whilst attending the event.

³ A document stating that the owner is a priest in good standing and requesting that he be permitted to say Mass. It must be signed by his bishop or religious superior. Without it he may meet with a refusal to say Mass if he is a stranger locally.

Team members must be aware of the fire evacuation procedure for the premises they are utilising and these procedures should be highlighted to the team each time a particular venue is used.

Team members and participants should be aware of the location of fully stocked first aid kits and the names of the qualified and designated first aid officers with current and valid first aid certificates.

The location leads are responsible for undertaking a written risk assessment of the facilities and identify that the facilities are able to meet the needs of all those attending the event.

Leaders and first aiders should be aware of any medical and medication needs of the children, young people or vulnerable adults in their care. Forms should be completed by parents in advance of the event including permission to give or dispense medicine where appropriate.

Emergency contact details should be held and should be easily accessible to the team leader, first aiders and location safeguarding representative.

4:4 Overnight accommodation

Male and female participants and team members will be housed in single-sex accommodation and as far as is possible on single-sex corridors.

Any evening/night time supervision of children by leaders must be undertaken by a mixed-sex pair.

Accommodate children of similar age together – where this is not always possible children in year 13 who have passed their 18th birthday and still in full time education can share rooms with those under 18 if needed.

4:5 Ratios

A general guide for minimum supervision ratios provided by the Department for Education (DfE) is one adult leader for every 10 children aged 13-18 years. However the ASCENT only works with children aged 14-18 years with a ratio of at least one adult for every three children. We will not drop below the minimum ratio.

When children and young people are identified as having additional needs that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist care or support, this must be discussed with the child's parent or carer and the child if appropriate.

All attempts should be made to ensure a male/female balance for all residential events.

There will be an active and continuous supervision for the duration of the activity, including during periods outside of structured activities as well as during the activities themselves.

4:6 Visitors during the course of the event

- The location safeguarding representative must be informed prior to the event as far as is possible, of any intended visitors to the premises during the course of the event – this includes those linked to the event and those who may be visiting the premises for any other purpose.
- These visitors must not have unsupervised access to the children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- The safeguarding policy should be available to these guests on request.
- These visitors must adhere to any instructions & safeguarding guidance given to them by the location leads or the location safeguarding representative.

4:7 Online safety for participants & team members

- Any social media (facebook, Instagram, snapchat etc) contact or communication should be set up in the name of the event and this should be monitored and maintained by a designated person(s) to ensure that those no longer involved with the event are not present on the group chat and also that members are adhering to an agreed code of conduct and behavior. These will be sent by the designated person(s) in conjunction with the parents and, as appropriate, the young people themselves.
- The designated person(s) is responsible to ensure that security settings are set at their highest
- Parent/carer consent should be gained to allow a child or young person to be involved in such social media/online activities
- Any concerning behaviours, activities and disclosures must be reported to the safeguarding officer for that event
- Team members must not accept friend or follow requests from those they are ministering to.
- Any communication online/social media with the children or young people must be only in the context of the ministry
- Team members must not share their personal emails, mobile numbers, addresses etc with the children or young people they are ministering to.

CSAS guidance for safe use of video conferencing platforms can be found at

<https://www.csas.uk.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Guidance-on-safeguarding-while-using-videoconferencing-platforms-for-ministry.pdf>

4:8 Consent

Written parental consent must be obtained in order for:

- The child young person to attend the event
- The team to communicate with the child via social media, email and where appropriate group chat/video (i.e. google hangout, skype, whatsapp)
- The taking and use of photographs and films (see the form in the national safeguarding procedures forms library for more info)

If it is necessary to communicate with the child/young person via text or email the theASCENT team member should be copied in to that communication

One of the location leads will be responsible as the point of contact for the parents/carers of the children/young people in order to:

- Reassure the parents/carers of any issues or ,
- Give the parents/carers a central person to communicate with for their own concerns, changes, queries etc

Parents should be made aware of the name and contact details of the location safeguarding representative for their location to enable them to communicate with them if they have any concerns for any of the children/young people and/or to discuss a concern about a member of the team.

Although the location safeguarding representative may be considered part of the team, it is important to remember that their role is concerned primarily with the welfare and safety of the children/young people attending the event and any concerns discussed with the safeguarding officer will only be further discussed, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, diocesan safeguarding coordinator, police, social services as deemed appropriate by the location safeguarding representative.

5: DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE

5:1 Dealing with a disclosure of abuse.

If a child or an adult discloses that he/she has been abused or is concerned about the behaviour of somebody the team member will:

- Make it clear from the outset that they CAN NOT promise total confidentiality but explain who the information will be shared with and why
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief

- Accept what is being said; do not seek to investigate because where appropriate, the investigation will be carried out by statutory authorities
- Allow the child to talk freely in his/her own words
- Use questions ONLY to clarify meaning – do not interrogate the child or ask leading/probing questions
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told
- As soon as possible make an accurate written record, using the child/young person/team members' own words. This record should be factual and not contain the team member's own opinions (appendix C)
- Locate and share the information with the location safeguarding representative as soon as possible. In an emergency, the police should be informed immediately.

LISTEN RECORD REFER

Dealing with a disclosure from a child will be stressful. The DSP must consider appropriate support for the team member reporting the disclosure, whilst remembering confidentiality.

5:2 Disclosure of self-harm

Team members **must not** promise total confidentiality in any situation when a child, young person or vulnerable adult is sharing private information with them. They should inform the young person at the outset, that any disclosure will need to be reported to the LSR and to the young person's parent/carer - it is best practice to try to gain their agreement for you to discuss this with their parent/carer. Self harm in and of itself is not a safeguarding concern however it is prudent to help the person seek the right support and guidance.

5:3 Feedback and reporting

A simple feedback of any difficulties should be emailed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the ASCENT UK, maintaining confidentiality at all times, at the conclusion of each event in order to reduce risks or improve practice at subsequent events.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for anonymising these reports in order to ensure lessons can be learnt, practice is improved and knowledge built upon.

5:4 Diocesan safeguarding officer

The location safeguarding representative should know who the diocesan safeguarding officer is for the location diocese and should know how to contact them. A record should be kept of the diocese of all attending children/young people and team members.

The diocesan safeguarding officer is an excellent source of expertise and support.

The diocesan safeguarding officer should be notified of any safeguarding issues arising and it is good practise to inform the safeguarding officer after the event that there has been no concern at that event.

Reporting a Significant Safeguarding Concern to CREW

Crew Trust must be promptly informed of major incidents. The protocol is for the safeguarding lead, copying in the steering group safeguarding rep, to report the incident to CREW. CREW will then notify the CREW Trustees on the steering group who will receive a report.

A 'significant concern' is if any of our team or young people have either been exposed to potential or actual harm via the conduct, or poor practices of anyone else involved (team, visitor, or participant) at the ASCENT.

Appendix A

Prayer ministry guidelines and laying on of hands

Prayer Ministry

- Make sure that if those receiving prayer ministry express the desire to sit down, this is made possible for them especially if they are frail or elderly.
- Where possible and appropriate, introduce yourself by name and ask their name.
- Avoid standing or sitting too close to the delegate you are praying with, as this can infringe on that person's personal space.
- Prayer ministry is not essentially focused upon giving counsel or detailed advice.
- Great care is required should a team member suspect that an individual presenting themselves for prayer/healing ministry lacks capacity (they are not in the right state of mind to agree to/partake in the activity).
- If the team member is unsure, or feel they are getting out of their depth they should go to the team leader who will support them.
- Advice should be sought immediately from the designated safeguarding representative if any safeguarding concerns arise or are suspected.
- If you are led to lay hands on the person, you should ask the delegate if this is OK.

Laying on of hands

If the person gives permission via word or action to have hands laid on them, these guidelines should be followed. Similarly, if a person's word, action or behaviour expresses objection to physical contact no laying on of hands can take place.

- It is expected that prayer ministers will only lay hands on appropriate parts of the body – ie shoulders, head, forearms.
- Prayer ministers will ask delegates for permission and identify the body part prior to laying on of hands– private areas must be avoided in all circumstances. If the delegate is uncomfortable with this, you can reach out your hands without touching them.
- When laying on hands do so lightly so there can be no accusation of pushing.
- Stroking, even if the person is crying, should not take place, hands must remain still when placed on the delegate's body.
- Team members should try to ensure that the individual does nothing which might cause harm to themselves or others.
- Do nothing to make the person feel claustrophobic or physically overwhelmed.
- If the person appears in any way uncomfortable or asks you to stop, hands must be removed immediately.

Words of Knowledge

- As you pray with the delegate, you may sense the Lord has prompted you with a picture, a verse of scripture or a sense for the delegate you are praying with – these are to be offered to the delegate for their own discernment and no pressure should be placed on the delegate to accept them. Particular prudence should be made when praying with young people who might not have the ability to "discern" words. They may also be in admiration of those praying with them and thus simply believe everything they say rather than weighing it against reality. Hence
- Pray quietly for wisdom before speaking a word of knowledge.
- Do not instruct a person with specific advice or personal opinion
- Be prepared to advise people about where they can get professional help or support if this is appropriate

Inner Healing

- Inner healing is a process, but prayer ministry is not a time for counselling. Be sensitive to what the Lord is doing at that moment.
- Try to ensure that the person feels at peace by the end of the prayer ministry.

Although we know that the Lord can instantly heal deep seated hurts, He does not always heal in that way. At a CCR event there may not be the time or opportunity to meet the person's needs as deeply as we would wish.

If the delegate has discussed receiving professional help, encourage them to continue with this.

Physical Healing

- Be sensitive to the physical needs of the person receiving prayer ministry.
- Ask the person to test the presence of the physical problem before prayer. Then afterwards ask them to test it again in order to be clear whether or not a healing – partial or complete – has taken place during the prayer time. This is not intended to put pressure on the person but to see if the Lord has worked a physical healing.

Scripture informs us that faith is often important in healing but not necessarily the faith of the individual themselves. Never blame a person's "lack of faith" if there is no apparent healing. The Lord is sovereign in this area, so it is very important that the person is not made to feel guilty. Reassure them of God's love and care for them and pray that they would receive God's love and peace.

- Prayer ministers should never advise a delegate to stop taking prescribed medicines or therapies. If the delegate feels they have been healed they should seek an appointment with their own GP or advanced nurse practitioners, if available at their surgery, for further investigation.

APPENDIX B - This is only required for priests from outside of England & Wales as each priest in good standing carries a celebret - if they cannot provide one they cannot attend. If a priest from an order is attending and does not carry a celebret they can use this form.

TESTIMONIAL OF SUITABILITY FOR MINISTRY

To:	<i>(Receiving bishop)</i>		
From:	<i>(sponsoring Bishop)</i>		
Address			
Tel:			
Concerning:	<i>(full name of visiting priest or deacon)</i>	DOB:	
This cleric is a: PRIEST / DEACON <i>(please circle whichever is appropriate)</i>			
<p>The Rev of the Diocese of is seeking to exercise ministry in your jurisdiction. Having carefully reviewed our personnel files and all other records that I hold; based on these and on my own personal knowledge, I am able to make each of the following statements which I have initialled:</p> <p><i>(NB - If you are unable to make one or more of the following statements, but would still claim that the priest or deacon is in good standing and that you would recommend him for ministry, please explain clearly the details and your reasons on the reverse side of this document.)</i></p>			
	He is a priest or deacon under my jurisdiction and is in good standing.		

	He has never been suspended or otherwise canonically disciplined.		
	No criminal charges have ever been brought against him and he has no criminal record.		
	He has never behaved in such a way as to indicate that he is likely to deal with children or vulnerable adults in an inappropriate manner nor have any allegations ever been made against him with respect to such inappropriate behaviour.		
	He does not have an unresolved problem with alcoholism or other forms of substance abuse.		
	He enjoys good physical and mental health and is not in need of medical treatment.		
	He is sufficiently fluent in the English language to enable him to undertake public active ministry.		
I hereby grant him permission to seek to exercise the ordained ministry in your jurisdiction in England and Wales for a period of from with the understanding that such a ministry is of a temporary nature.			
This document issued on: and is valid until: <i>(maximum 12 months from date of issue)</i>			
Signature:		Date:	

NB - This document is valid for a maximum of 12 months from date of issue. Please affix official seal of Diocese

Appendix C

Reporting of safeguarding disclosure

Information received at 00:00 on 00/00/00 from name of person whose role at this event was role/title and the can be contact at telephone number / email		
This information was received by: telephone / letter / in person / email (delete as needed) Contemporaneous notes should be kept of telephone/in person reports and held securely to be passed to the diocesan safeguarding officer		
What is the complaint? Disclosure:		
Name of complainant:	Age of complainant:	
Name of victim:	Age of victim:	
Names and ages of any witnesses		
Allegation against (name, age, description and any other info)		
The incident Does this incident relate to physical / sexual / emotional abuse; neglect or Other		
TIME:	DATE:	VENUE DETAILS:
Signature of complainant		
Signature of witness		
Signature of person receiving disclosure		
Signature of person receiving complaint		
Time and date of form completed		

Please send this and any accompanying evidence or statements to the appropriate diocesan safeguarding officer.

Diocesan contacts

Arundel and Brighton	01293 651148	Bethany Arthur bethany.arthur@abdiocese.org.uk
Birmingham	0121 230 6240	Claire Reay safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk
Brentwood	01277 265234	Mr Simon Moules simon@dioceseofbrentwood.org
Cardiff	0292 036 5961	Chris Mullane SC@rcadc.org
Clifton	07887 990385	Becky Cawsey Becky.cawsey@cliftondiocese.com
East Anglia	020 8505 4199	Mr Mick Thurley safeguarding.coordinator@rcdea.org.uk
Hallam	0114 256 6454	Marie O Donnelly modonnelly@hallam-diocese.com
Hexham and Newcastle	0191 243 3305	Ian Colling ian.colling@diocesehn.org.uk
Lancaster	01524 596069	Sharon Tipping sharon.tipping@lancasterrcdiocese.org.uk
Leeds	0113 261 8069	Mary Kearney safeguarding@dioceseofleeds.org.uk
Liverpool	0151 522 1013	Mark Robson m.robson@rcaol.org.uk
Meneva	01792 468672	Morgan Beake safeguarding@menevia.org
Middlesborough	07562 935641	Jacqui Drysdale jacqui.drysdale@rcdfmidd.org.uk
Northampton	01604 723514 07833 050628	Danielle Dixon safeguarding@northamptondiocese.com
Nottingham	0115 953 9849	Jane Black safeguarding@dioceseofnottingham.uk
Plymouth	01364 645431	Robert Brown robert.brown@prcdtr.org.uk
Portsmouth	02394 216488	Ruth Attfield safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk
Salford	0161 817 2206	Danny Islip Daniel.islip@dioceseofsalford.org.uk
Shrewsbury	07557731492	Andrew O'Brien andrew.obrien@DioceseofShrewsbury.org
Southwark	020 7261 1606	Mary Jane Crowley maryjanecrowley@rcaos.org.uk
Westminster	020 7798 9196	Geraldine Allen geraldineallen@rcdow.org.uk
Wrexham	01978 262726	Mary Rowlands safeguarding@rcdwxm.org.uk

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Further information can be found via the Diocesan websites.