

Roles and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Trustee, Safeguarding Committee and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Safeguarding is a collective responsibility across the Church. Each Religious Life Group (RLG) is accountable for its own safeguarding regime.

Responsibilities include ensuring that:

- Your RLG has the necessary safeguarding policies, processes and procedures in place.
- Everyone in your RLG knows how to safeguard its people and what to do when a safeguarding concern occurs, including how/when/to whom it should be reported.
- There is an embedded robust, 'living' safeguarding culture, within your RLG.
- The trustees are compliant with their legal and regulatory safeguarding duties¹.

Safeguarding Trustee

Your RLG's Safeguarding Trustee is accountable for reporting on safeguarding to the Trustee Board, which has overall oversight of and responsibility for safeguarding.

Safeguarding Committee

Your RLG's Safeguarding Committee is accountable to the Safeguarding Trustee.

The Safeguarding Committee supports, assists and advises the Trustees, via the Safeguarding Trustee, to ensure the Trustees are discharging their safeguarding duties correctly.

Safeguarding Lead (SL)

The SL is accountable to the Safeguarding Trustee and Safeguarding Committee and acts as the main source of support, advice and expertise for safeguarding in your RLG.

¹ Including their duties as set out in the RLG's Governing Document, Canon Law of the Catholic Church, Charity Law, Charity Commission guidance and the standards, policies and procedures of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (this list is not exhaustive and individual RLGs need to ensure they are fully aware of all their legal and regulatory safeguarding duties)

The SL should:

- Be someone with resources and capacity to act
- Not be the most senior person in your RLG
- Be one person with overall responsibility
- Be available when your RLG is active

In most RLGs, the SL will not be a Trustee but will be a senior member of staff, reporting directly to the leader of your RLG. The SL must have the resources (depending on the size and activities of your RLG) and capacity to act and to influence others.

Roles

The Safeguarding Trustee, Safeguarding Committee and Safeguarding Lea are expected to work together to:

- Advise your RLG how to adopt its safeguarding policy, standards and operational framework.
- Ensure that a robust culture of people safeguarding is embedded throughout your RLG.
- Provide strategic oversight for all aspects of safeguarding work and ensure your RLG's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and fully effective, in helping protect people from potential or actual harm.
- Provide assurance to the Trustee Board that your RLG's agreed safeguarding, procedures and standards are adhered to by all involved with your RLG.
- Respond appropriately and quickly to all identified safeguarding risks and escalate to the relevant local authorities and regulators/organisations as necessary, including Social Services, the Police, the Charity Commission, the RLSS Safeguarding Team (or alternative chosen safeguarding service provider) and, as appropriate, fellow Trustees and the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).

As the main source of support, advice and expertise for safeguarding in your RLG, the SL will also:

- Advise and support the Senior Leadership Team in developing and establishing your RLG's approach to safeguarding.
- Play a lead role in maintaining and reviewing your RLG's plan for safeguarding.

Religious Life Safeguarding Service. PO Box 878, York, YO316GS

T. +44 (0) 1515 562311 E. Admin@religioussafeguarding.org

Registered in England no. 13462386

- Coordinate the distribution of policies, procedures and safeguarding resources throughout your RLG.

- Advise on training needs and development, providing training where appropriate.
- Provide safeguarding advice and support to staff and volunteers.
- Manage (with ongoing support as necessary from the Safeguarding Trustee and Safeguarding Committee) safeguarding concerns, allegations or incidents reported to your RLG (these can be delegated to the RLSS but the SL will retain oversight).
- Manage (with ongoing support as necessary from the Safeguarding Trustee and Safeguarding Committee) referrals to key safeguarding agencies of any safeguarding incidents.

Responsibilities

The Safeguarding Trustee, Safeguarding Committee and Safeguarding Lead need to:

- Understand safeguarding legislation and best practice.
- Be familiar with and use the RLSS and the CSSA services and guidelines, so that safeguarding issues are properly considered and addressed, as a priority
- Ensure that appropriate vetting and recruitment checks are undertaken for your RLG's people including, where necessary, [Disclosure and Barring Service checks](#) and overseas equivalents².

² If any of the RLG's people are subject to a criminal records check but have been in the UK for less than six months (and have not been here before), as well as requiring a valid DBS check, an overseas criminal records check should be obtained. DBS guidance on this can be found through the link below:

[Criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)

- Ensure (via a report from the SL) that safeguarding training programmes are undertaken by your RLG's people, so that they can fulfil their duties and responsibilities, in relation to safeguarding.
- Ensure (via a report from the SL) that your RLG has responded appropriately to all safeguarding incidents and any changes in relevant legislation and/or your RLG's structure/working practices.
- Ensure (via a report from the SL) that relevant data about safeguarding incidents occurring, subsequent reports to the relevant authorities/regulators/organisations and outcomes are recorded centrally and in keeping with data protection requirements.
- Hold meetings immediately in response to a safeguarding incident occurring and at least annually, to ensure up-to-date knowledge and awareness of safeguarding legislation and best practice.
- Input on safeguarding issues.
- Attend regular safeguarding training.
- Lead by example and be personable and facilitate engagement and participation in relation to safeguarding, from everyone in your RLG.

Some useful website resources

Religious Life Safeguarding Service's [website](#)

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency's [website](#)

The Charity Commission's [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees](#)

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations' [Safeguarding for trustees](#)

Bond's [Good governance for safeguarding](#)