

# **Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk**



**Cor et Lumen Christi Community**



# **This Policy and the National Safeguarding Standards**

The policies that follow have been prepared taking the new CSSA ‘National Safeguarding Standards’ into account. The standards are listed below followed by references showing where they are reflected in the policy which follows.

1. **Embed safeguarding in the Church body’s leadership, governance, ministry and culture**  
(Throughout the document, e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.2, Sections 5, 6, et al.)
2. **Communicate the Church’s safeguarding message**  
(5.4.1.5, et al.)
3. **Engage with and care for those who report having been harmed**  
(Section 8)
4. **Effectively manage allegations and concerns**  
(Section 8)
5. **Manage and support subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents)**  
(8.5)
6. **Implement robust human resource management**  
(Section 5)
7. **Provide and access training and support for safeguarding**  
(Section 6, 7)
8. **Quality assure compliance to continuously improve practice**  
(2.1, 2.3)

More details can be found online - <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/national-safeguarding-standards/the-standards/>

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## **1.0 Safeguarding Mission Statement**

1.1 The Cor et Lumen Christi Community believes that all people are created in the image 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 adults at risk.

1.2 Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. We have a legal obligation – under the Children Act 2004 as well as under various other legislation – in addition to our moral obligation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to protect children and adults at risk from physical, emotional or sexual abuse and to make every reasonable effort to provide for them a safe environment.

1.3 This policy sets out our principles and aims in regard to safeguarding, which we expect all community members and volunteers, or those otherwise ministering on behalf of the community, to follow. This policy also seeks to provide guidelines for best practice to assist in identifying ways in which they can safeguard the best interests of the children and young people in their care and their own interests also.

1.4 The Cor et Lumen Christi Community exists in four countries, across five fraternities. This document relates to fraternities in England and Wales, however, it is the community's policy that each fraternity has a safeguarding policy based upon this one but adapted to local laws and customs.

## **2.0 Approval and Maintenance of These Policies**

2.1 This policy, as well as any future updates to it, should be made available to the applicable safeguarding authorities covering areas in which a community fraternity is based, as well as any area in which the community conducts, or intends to conduct, any significant and regular ministry. Should those authorities suggest any changes, these should be considered as a matter of urgency by the trustees with the advice of the community's safeguarding leads.

2.2 This policy, as well as any future updates to it, should also be submitted to any insurance company, or any other body, whose agreement with us requires certain safeguarding measures to be in place.

2.3 Whenever these policies change - with the exception of small changes to language and minor details - a Risk Assessment should be carried out and the results stored as detailed in the section covering the 'Safe Storage of Information.'

## **3.0 Principles and Aims**

### **3.1 Our Principles**

3.1.1 The welfare of children and their needs and feelings are afforded consideration when developing activities within community programmes and events.

3.1.2 All children shall have equal opportunities to participate in activities as far as the protected characteristics of our community allow.

3.1.3 Where a child may need additional support due to a disability, the group leader shall endeavour to provide additional support within the team or negotiate support with the parent or carer.

3.1.4 All members and volunteers, when with children, endeavour to identify their needs and to report any concerns immediately.

3.1.5 All members and volunteers, when with adults at risk, endeavour to identify the needs of adults at risk and to protect their dignity.

### 3.2 Our aims

3.2.1 To provide all members and volunteers with the necessary guidelines/ training to enable them to meet their responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.

3.2.2 To endeavour to provide safe and consistent practice across all community activities.

3.2.3 To support volunteers in carrying out their responsibilities.

3.2.4 To endeavour that the needs of adults at risk be met.

## 4.0 Definitions

### 4.1 Child

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

4.1.2 In Church and Educational settings it is common to refer to 'Young People'. This generally means teenagers, however it is within the legal definition of the term child/ children. Therefore the phrases and words, 'child,' 'children', and 'children and young people.' can be taken to mean the same thing as one another in this document.

### 4.2 Vulnerable Adult or 'Adult at Risk'

4.2.1 A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over, who is at greater risk or in need of greater care. The Care Act (2014) stipulates that safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

4.2.1.1 Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority or any other provider is meeting any of those needs).

4.2.1.2 Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and

4.2.1.3 As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

4.2.2 In this document where “child” is written, vulnerable adult is also implied.

4.2.3 The term ‘Adult at Risk’ is starting to become more common in safeguarding nowadays. Hence, we are using it more in this document. However, we are taking the two terms to mean exactly the same thing.

#### 4.3 Cor et Lumen Christi Community

4.3.1 The Cor Lumen Christi Trust is a registered charity and exists for the advancement of the Christian religion and education and the relief of suffering and poverty, in accordance with the doctrines and policies of the Roman Catholic Church.

## 5.0 Requirements for Members and Volunteers

5.1 Every member in a commitment and every member of a mission fellowship:

5.1.1 is required to provide two referees who can vouch for their good character and suitability to work around Children and Adults at Risk.

5.1.2 is required to undertake safeguarding training at least at a basic level and at least within one year of joining.

5.1.3 is required to refresh their safeguarding training at least at the basic level, and at least every three years.

5.1.4 is required to refrain from ministering unsupervised unless the community has verified that they have an Enhanced DBS Certificate.

5.2 In addition to the above, those ministering alone, or anybody engaged in regular work with children or Adults at Risk, as well as anybody living residentially as part of the Community of life:

5.2.1 is required to undergo, and pass, an Enhanced DBS check immediately and to have that check refreshed at least every three years.

5.2.2 is strongly recommended to register their DBS Certificate with the Online Update Service.

### 5.3 More details on DBS Checks and References

5.3.1 The references noted above should be checked and at least one non-prejudicial reference received before the individual engages in ministry.

5.3.2 Those noted above who are under the age of 18 should, if a member or volunteer, be put through the same process of DBS checks and reference checks if they are engaging in regular work with children and/ or Adults at Risk, if the appropriate administration exists to process the checks. If they cannot be checked, then they should not have unsupervised access to Children or Adults at Risk.

5.3.3 DBS forms should include both the 'Children' and 'Vulnerable Adult' workforces, or equivalent terminology and should always be at the 'Enhanced' level, as there will be regular work with children and Adults at Risk.

5.3.4 In respect to those members of the community based in Hungary, Poland or any other locations outside the UK as there may be in the future, our policy is that they obtain equivalent clearance to work with children and Adults at Risk to a local standard as defined by the local diocese, as available.

### 5.4 Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP)

5.4.1 The Local Community Council should ensure that each fraternity has at least two named DSPs who will:

5.4.1.1 organise appropriate training.

5.4.1.2 process DBS checks and advise the local council as to who has a DBS clearance, who does not and what that means in terms of the work that they can do.

5.4.1.3 liaise with the national safeguarding lead, the Local Community Council and others as appropriate in the case of a blemished disclosure.

5.4.1.4 ensure that a good culture of safeguarding exists in the fraternity and that appropriate arrangements are in place for events and other ministries.

5.4.1.5 The details of named persons for each in person public event shall be given to the Cor et Lumen Christi national safeguarding contact and also made known to members of the relevant fraternity and displayed publicly during events.

## 5.5 Position of Trust

5.5.1 Volunteers should understand that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for an adult or a child over 16 to engage in certain sexual activities 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.

## 5.6 Whistle Blowing

5.6.1 Guidance on dealing with disclosures and allegations is detailed below, however a few notes on 'whistleblowing' are worthwhile

5.6.2 Cor et Lumen Christi are committed to a deeply embedded culture of Safeguarding. This includes acknowledging the possibility that allegations – true or false – may arise against members of the community and those ministering on its behalf.

5.6.3 Everybody should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in safeguarding procedures. Concerns can initially be raised with those in charge of individual events, sessions, groups, and those persons may be able to take initial actions to mitigate further danger. In all cases, the DSP should be notified as soon as possible.

5.6.4 Anybody - whether a member of the community, or a member of the public - may directly approach the DSP with a concern.

5.6.5 Should concerns reflect the practice of a person in a leadership role, then this should always go straight to the DSP, who will then decide appropriate action.

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

## 5.7 Security of buildings and the suitability of persons on site

5.7.1 All members and volunteers are responsible for helping to keep their community secure. All persons are expected to challenge those within the building and grounds who are not known.

5.7.2 Should it be discovered that a person attending, or seeking to attend, one of our events is recorded on the Sexual Offender Register, early contact should be made with the relevant authority.



## **6.0 Guidelines for Good Practice in Ministry**

6.0.1 Situations in the life and work of the community which involve adults being responsible for children and adults at risk include but are not limited to the following: organised children's ministry sessions, youth ministry organised or hosted by the community, prayer ministry times at conferences, events and mission outreach.

### **6.1 General Guidelines**

6.1.1 Members and volunteers need to think and act carefully to avoid situations, which could lead to accusations of misconduct.

6.1.2 It is best practice to ensure that team members chaperone each other at all times. Therefore, at no time should one adult and one child/ young person be together in private. It is far preferable to ensure that two or more adults are present, but it is acceptable in cases where multiple adults are not available for an adult to be in a space with multiple children.

6.1.3 Ensure that an adequate ratio of adults to children/ young people is maintained. We value the recommendations of the NSPCC regarding the ratio of adults to children and, even though these are not legally binding, we seek to follow these whenever possible.

6.1.4 For any activities for under 18s away from the normal meeting place, ensure that parental consent has been obtained and a member of the local leadership team knows where the group is working. Parents should be informed of all relevant details as part of the consent process.

6.1.5 It is important to try and maintain an adequate gender balance within the team. Where there is a residential component to an activity, or where changing of clothing or bathing/ showering may be required, it is vital that there be proportional representation among the team members on site. In other words, if there are any girls present, there should be at least one female community member or volunteer and if there are any boys present, there should be at least one male community member or volunteer. This is less vital for daytime meetings which include none of these aspects, but still preferable.

6.1.6 It should be remembered that inexperienced members or volunteers will benefit from clear guidance and supervision, and should not be left alone with young people nor responsible for leading activities with them until they are able to safely do so.

6.1.7 All team members need to know what to do in the case of suspected or alleged abuse (see point 8, below).

6.1.8 Ensure that members and volunteers know how to summon help, obtain first aid and know where fire extinguishers, alarms and emergency exits are located.

## 6.2 Prayer Ministry

6.2.1 When working with young people or adults at risk, these bullet points should be considered in addition to the community's general Prayer Ministry Guidelines.

6.2.1.1 Lead the person into the prayer, endeavouring to ensure their safety and comfort.

6.2.1.2 At least one person should take overall responsibility for the gathering, leading it appropriately, and paying attention to any issues that may arise.

6.2.1.3 If you are going to use touch, be sensitive to what is appropriate. Respect the child's personal space and always get permission from the child and their parent/carer first.

6.2.1.4 Keep the group in the same space, chaperoning each other. In cases where a person needs more privacy, at least two team members (with at least one being the gender of the person being ministered to) must be present at all times.

6.2.1.5 At the end, lead them carefully out of Prayer Ministry to endeavour no one leaves the session unduly anxious.

## 7.0 Safeguarding Training

7.1 Our policy is to provide training to our staff as follows:

7.1.1 At least one person in each fraternity and/ or location should be trained to Level 3 or a suitable alternative wherein training provides a thorough overview of safeguarding practice and procedures such as is appropriate for those who take on safeguarding roles within their organisations. It is envisaged that the DSP in each location will always be among those trained to Level 3.

7.1.2 At least ten people (or an appropriate amount as designated by the local Diocesan Safeguarding Office) should be trained to Level 2 or a suitable alternative, providing a good grounding in safeguarding practice for those who work regularly with children and/ or Adults at Risk, but who have no specific safeguarding responsibilities over and above other such workers. Those who are responsible for specific projects, responsible for supervising others, and those who lead sessions and so on should be among those trained at this level.

7.1.3 Every single person who engages in any kind of ministry on behalf of the community should be given basic safeguarding training, which would normally take at least one hour. Such training should cover the basics of safeguarding good prac-

tice, including, but not limited to: how to work safely, how to interact appropriately, and what to do if the worker has a concern or is made aware of an allegation or disclosure. It is not envisaged that anybody trained at this level should be leading sessions or be responsible for others.

7.1.4 While it is desirable that everybody should have the above training before beginning their roles or conducting any ministry, the community recognises that this may not always be feasible. It is therefore the policy that everyone receive the appropriate training within, at the most, one year of beginning their role. Nobody who has not undergone basic training should ever minister unsupervised, or lead a group.

7.1.5 Training should be delivered by a suitably qualified person, defined here as somebody qualified through a QCA-recognised awarding body (or international equivalent), suitably experienced in education or pastoral work, or otherwise approved by the local diocese.

7.1.6 Training should be renewed at least every three years, and an annual refresher is recommended if possible.

7.1.7 A record should be kept detailing who has undergone training, at what level, and when. As part of this record, people should sign a document stating that they have received and understood the training. These records should then be stored appropriately, as per the stipulations around 'Safe Storage of Information' below.

7.1.8 Copies, or at least details, of any certificates gained or generated as part of this training should be similarly stored.

## **8.0 Dealing with Disclosures, Concerns, or Allegations**

8.1 A concern is when somebody, for one reason or another, believes that a young person or Adult at Risk may be in danger. A disclosure is when that concern arises because of something somebody is told.

8.2 An allegation is any information which indicates that a person may have:

8.2.1 behaved in a way that has harmed, or may harm, a child or Adult at Risk.

8.2.3 behaved in a way that would indicate that they pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk

8.2.4 possibly committed a criminal act against or relating to a child or Adult at Risk.

## 8.3 Guidelines for Volunteers and Community Members

8.3.1 If a child or Adult at Risk discloses that he/she has been abused in some way then the adult receiving the disclosure should:

8.3.1.1 Listen to and accept what is being said. Allow the person to use their own words. Tell the child that you are taking seriously what they are telling you and that you will pass it on to the appropriate person. Do not tell the child that you believe them (the allegation may be false, and we also have a duty to those accused) but do not play down nor minimise the allegation. It is not your job to determine whether the allegation is true or not. Professionals will see to this. You are simply there to listen and to pass on.

8.3.1.2 Use questions ONLY to clarify meaning – do not interrogate the child. It is especially important not to ask ‘Why?’ questions around why somebody may have done something, and it is equally important not to ask leading questions that might put ideas in the child’s mind, e.g. “and then, did he do such-and-such as well?”

8.3.1.3 Maintain confidentiality, in other words do not disclose what has been said other than to the appropriate people, however,

8.3.1.4 DO NOT promise total confidentiality, as this may not ultimately be in the best interest of the child. Whenever anybody approaches you asking if they can share something with you, it is always wise to say something like “I won’t gossip with anybody about anything you tell me, but if you tell me that you, or somebody else, is in danger, then I may have to pass that on to somebody.”

8.3.1.5 Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told

8.3.1.6 As soon as possible make an accurate written record, using the child’s own words. This record should be factual and not contain the volunteer’s own opinions

8.3.1.7 Pass the information on to a Designated Safeguarding Person as soon as possible.

8.3.1.8 If you suspect that there is an imminent danger (for example, a child is about to be picked up by a parent who poses a serious danger) and you can’t immediately access the DSP, then you should call the police or another relevant authority as appropriate. Every Local Authority has a safeguarding phone number which can be found online.

8.3.1.9 A good memory aid is LISTEN - RECORD – REFER

8.3.1.10 In the case of a concern or disclosure where the alleged victim is not the initiator of the contact, the same procedures should broadly be followed, however, the DSP and the National Safeguarding Coordinator should work together to determine how appropriate it is to approach the child or Adult at Risk.

#### 8.4 Responsibilities of the DSP following a disclosure or allegation

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

8.4.2 Once details of a disclosure have been passed to the DSP, the DSP must act immediately. The national safeguarding lead should be informed. The Local Community Council should be informed, and they will decide whether to inform the National Community Council. The DSP and the national safeguarding coordinator will then work together to determine appropriate steps, which may include contacting the local authority safeguarding officer, contacting the police, or similar.

8.4.3 Fraternities based outside of the UK will follow similar, locally defined procedures at this point.

8.4.4 Every Local Authority has a Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) (or similar) who is responsible for the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children, whether in formal employment or voluntarily. Every allegation made against such a person should be notified to the LADO covering the area in which the alleged offence occurred, and this notification should take place within one working day at the latest. The LADO will not investigate but will oversee the process and liaise with any other organisations involved such as the police or social services. The instructions of the LADO should be followed.

8.4.5 If the accused person is under the community's direction, the DSP should liaise with the council or event leadership to ensure that the person accused is removed from contact with children and Adults at Risk immediately pending advice from the proper authorities.

8.4.6 The DSP should make sure that the proper authorities are informed, including the LADO as noted above in the case of children. If a crime is reported, the police should also be informed. Depending on the specifics of the case, it may also be necessary to inform social services.

8.4.7 The local diocese should also be informed and advice sought.

8.4.8 The DSP and the national safeguarding lead will then liaise with the LADO, the police and others to determine the next steps, both during and after the investigation.

8.5 Following the conclusion of the statutory processes, the national safeguarding lead should liaise with the council and the trustees to determine the next steps in terms of how the accused person is handled, how the alleged victim is handled and what risk assessments and procedural changes are necessary going forward.

8.6 It may also be necessary to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

8.7 Everything should be recorded and the details stored as noted below.

## **9.0 Safe Storage of Information**

9.1 The following procedures should be followed with regards to any information held about a person, situation, allegation, or other sensitive matter (Indeed, it may be useful to store all safeguarding information in such a manner so that it is together for ease of access):

9.1.1 Access to such information should be limited to those with a safeguarding responsibility, designated people from the relevant community Councils, and any personnel from statutory authorities as appropriate.

9.1.2 Such information should only be accessed by those people when a specific need arises for the purposes of processing checks, improving safeguarding in the community, and responding to incidents and allegations.

9.1.3 Where possible, all information should be kept in a digital format. This can be done by scanning or photographing paper documents and by keeping electronic documents in that format, printing them only when necessary.

9.1.4 All information should be stored on a suitably secure system, and only accessible by the above named persons.

9.1.5 Any information which has to be stored on paper or by other non-digital means, should be stored in a lockable filing cabinet in a lockable office. Both should be locked when not in use, and the filing cabinet should only be accessible to those appropriate persons listed above.

9.1.6 Details of any allegations or concerns of potential abuse or neglect, together with all actions taken and any other relevant information and correspondence should be stored as part of this system.

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