

Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

Policy for Safeguarding: Protecting the Vulnerable



(Updated 2026)

Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

Policy for Safeguarding: Protecting the Vulnerable (2026)

Section 1: Introductory Policy Statement

1. This Diocese is committed to ensuring that all who participate in the life of the Church do so in safety, and free from harm or abuse.
2. Abuse occurs when a person uses the power they have in a relationship or situation to control another person's behaviour in a way that benefits the person who has power, but harms the person they are trying to control. All forms of abuse involve the misuse or abuse of power and betrayal of trust.
3. This Diocese affirms that no form of exploitation or abuse of a vulnerable person can ever be consistent with Christian principles. In particular, this Diocese affirms its belief that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is integral to the life and ministry of the Church.
4. The description 'Safe Church' speaks essentially of faithfulness to the gospel, affirming that all humans are made and loved by God, and recognising Jesus' attention to children and the most vulnerable in society. Safe churches are to be places where all may seek to be transformed by the love and power of God. **Safe church, safeguarding and protecting the vulnerable** means policies and practices adopted to promote the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of all persons within the church, including children, young people and vulnerable adults and protect them from abuse.
5. This policy and the Code of Practice is founded upon key theological themes – compassion, welcome, truthfulness, justice, repentance, reconciliation and peace.
6. This Diocese operates in multiple political jurisdictions and works with people from a diverse spread of nationalities, ethnic backgrounds and cultures. Legal procedures differ widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Within that context each Parish is required to adopt a Safeguarding Policy incorporating the following Code of Practice, in order to promote a Safe Church culture.
7. This policy and the Code of Practice are compliant with and draw upon the **Guidelines of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission**.
8. This policy chiefly relates to the ministries of the Anglican Church in this Diocese - the work that is undertaken in a variety of situations and forms, including the provision of spiritual advice and support, education, visiting and listening, assistance in times of need. All who work on behalf of the church must act in the best interests of those among whom they minister.

Section 2: Code of Practice

This Code of Practice contains resources and guidelines for diocesan and parish safeguarding. It does not stand alone, and it may be relevant, especially in the event of a complaint, to refer also to other diocesan policies available on the diocesan website at <https://www.cypgulf.org/resources/?Policy>

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The Safeguarding Responsibilities of the Diocese

***Note** Parish responsibilities are contained in the Parish Safeguarding Policy Statement and Parish Safeguarding Good Practice.*

1. The Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, in the work of its clergy, lay ministers, employed staff and volunteers in diocesan roles, will have regard to the wellbeing of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. All clergy, lay ministers, employed staff and volunteers in diocesan roles will endeavour to create and maintain environments in which all can experience nurture and care.
2. The Diocese will provide, through the work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer training and support, so that all clergy, lay ministers, employed staff and volunteers in diocesan roles are equipped to follow safe working practices, and able to recognise and challenge any abuse of power.
3. The Diocese will ensure, through the work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, that processes are in place for listening and advocating on behalf of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
4. The Diocese will ensure, through the work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer that safeguarding concerns or allegations are responded to promptly and in line with this policy and the Code of Practice.
5. The churches in this Diocese offer a welcome to all, including those who may present a safeguarding risk. In co-operation with the relevant Archdeacon or the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, any such risk will be assessed and agreed steps taken in mitigation. The rights under law of those who may present a safeguarding risk will be respected.
6. The Diocese is committed to using rigorous systems of selection and appointment for all who will hold the Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate. All those who apply for selection to a public representative ministry will be required to undergo a referencing exercise. In addition, those who ask for recognition of a previously held ministry should supply a reference from their former Bishop, or appropriate authority.
7. The Diocese will also provide, upon application by the appropriate authority, 'Ministry Suitability Information' for any minister, lay or ordained, who is to be authorised to undertake ministry in another diocese of the Anglican Communion.
8. All those exercising a ministry authorised by the Bishop, whether ordained or lay, are required to have read, and agreed to, the Professional Ministerial Guidelines published by the Diocese from time to time.

Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

1. Under the authority of the Bishop this safeguarding policy will be supported, monitored and reviewed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
2. Each meeting of the Diocesan Standing Committee and Synod will receive a report from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
3. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will arrange training for ministers and parishes as appropriate.
4. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will ensure a record is kept of safeguarding training undertaken by all who hold the Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate.
5. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will be able to advise parishes on the production and renewing of safeguarding policies.
6. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will appoint suitably qualified Investigating Officers for work with safeguarding concerns and allegations that are brought to the Panel's notice.
7. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for ensuring that victims/survivors of abuse are offered appropriate pastoral care.
8. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for ensuring that those who find themselves the subject of concerns or allegations have their rights under law respected and are given pastoral care as the process progresses.

Parish Safeguarding Officers

1. Each parish in the Diocese will appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer
2. The Parish Safeguarding Officer must be a member of the Laity, on the Electoral Roll of the Parish, be appointed by the Church Council, and have a clear Police check, which should be renewed every 3 years
3. The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) must understand and be committed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice.
4. The Parish Safeguarding Officer must regularly attend the required safeguarding training in order to be equipped to follow safe working practices, and to be able to recognise and challenge any abuse of power.
5. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will represent the parish on the Parish Safeguarding Officers' Forum
6. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will ensure that appropriate training in safeguarding is undertaken by members of Church Councils, parish officers, employees and volunteers, and will keep a record of names of attendees and dates of the training.
7. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will oversee, according to the Parish Safeguarding Policy, the referencing process for volunteers in the parish and will ensure that appropriate role descriptions are provided.
8. The Parish Safeguarding Officer is the person in the parish to whom any knowledge or suspicion of abuse is reported. The PSO will listen carefully, make a written record of what is said, which will be securely stored. Without further investigation, the SO

will decide who needs to be informed locally and will contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer regarding next steps. If further investigation is needed this will be undertaken by an Investigating Officer.

9. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will
 - need to be able to keep sensitive information confidential
 - possess good listening skills
 - be able to undertake the required training

Investigating Officer

1. Investigating Officers will be appointed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
2. An Investigating Officer will have a clear Police check, which should be renewed every 3 years.
3. An Investigating Officer will
 - need to be able to keep sensitive information confidential
 - possess good listening skills
 - be able to undertake the required training
4. An Investigating Officer will usually have received safeguarding training to a high level in a different professional setting than the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.
5. An Investigating Officer will have access to regular updates in safeguarding practice and regularly renew their training.
6. An Investigating Officer will usually have no connection to the Parish in which an investigation needs to be conducted.
7. An Investigating Officer will report the results of any investigation to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and offer advice about actions to be taken.

The Provision of Safeguarding Training

1. All clergy, lay ministers, employed staff and volunteers in diocesan roles need regular education and training about safeguarding to help them to maintain appropriate boundaries in their ministry and work relationships. It is particularly important to ensure that those who have moved from another *province* or church tradition receive this education and training. The training will mean that clergy, lay ministers, employed staff and volunteers in diocesan roles cannot plead ignorance of the appropriate standards for a safe Church environment.
2. There is training for
 - diocesan senior staff
 - all who hold the Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate
 - Parish Safeguarding Officers
 - Investigating Officers
 - members of Church Councils, parish officers and volunteers, and diocesan employees and volunteers
3. Training about safeguarding should be renewed at least every three years.

Appendix 1

Definitions from Guidelines of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission

Abuse, which occurs in families and in the community as well as in the church, encompasses a wide variety of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. Abuse is behaviour which causes harm to another person or is undertaken with the intention of causing harm to another person, or which may place another person at the risk of harm.

All forms of abuse involve the misuse or abuse of power.

Abuse is when a person uses the power they have in a relationship or situation to control another person's behaviour (to make another person do certain things or not do certain things), in a way that benefits the person who has power, but harms the person they are trying to control.

Power dynamics can be formal or informal:

- People may have formal power through their role or position; such as clergy, staff, or voluntary leaders.
- People may have informal power; through personal influence, social connections, experience within the community, finances, education, gender, age, ethnicity, etc.
- Power differences can increase or limit a person's ability to make choices and take action in a situation.

Abuse takes place through the manipulation of power and betrayal of trust.

Types of abuse include:

- bullying;
- concealment of abuse;
- cyber abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- financial abuse;
- gender-based violence;
- harassment;
- neglect;
- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse; and
- spiritual abuse.

Abuse of children and young people is commonly called 'child abuse'. Abuse of a vulnerable adult can take many forms. Abuse in a family or domestic context is commonly called 'domestic abuse'.

age of consent means the age at which a person can legally consent to sexual activity. The age of consent varies in different countries. In some countries a person cannot legally consent to sexual activity unless they are married.

allegations means the allegations which are the subject of the complaint. **authorised** means authorised by a licence or other similar authority.

bullying occurs where anyone who works or participates in the life of the Church engages in behaviour directed to a person which is repeated, unreasonable (such as where it is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening), and creates a risk to the person's health and safety. It includes:

- making derogatory, demeaning or belittling comments or jokes about someone's appearance, lifestyle, background, or capability;
 - communicating in an abusive manner;
 - spreading rumours or innuendo about someone or undermining in other ways their performance or reputation;
 - dismissing or minimising someone's legitimate concerns or needs;
 - inappropriately ignoring someone, or excluding someone from information or activities;
 - touching someone threateningly or inappropriately;
 - teasing someone, or playing pranks or practical jokes on someone; and
 - displaying or distributing written or visual material that degrades or offends.
- It does **not** consist of conduct of a church worker carried out in a reasonable manner, such as:

- disagreeing with or criticising someone's beliefs or opinions or actions in an honest and respectful way;
- giving information about inappropriate behaviour in an objective way to the person or people concerned and to any other person with a proper reason for having that information;
- setting reasonable performance goals, standards or deadlines;
- giving information about unsatisfactory performance in an honest and constructive way; and
- taking legitimate disciplinary action.

'Cyberbullying' is a form of bullying which involves the use of technology such as sending text messages, emails, and posts on social media.

child means anyone who under the applicable law has not attained their majority. In many countries a child is anyone under the age of 18 years. In some countries, where a distinction is made between children and young people, a child is anyone under the age of 16 years.

church authority means a diocesan bishop or a person or body having authority to ordain, license, elect, appoint, dismiss or suspend a church worker.

child pornography describes or depicts a person who is or who appears to be a child engaged in sexual activity, or in a sexual context. It can include any film, printed matter, electronic data, computer image and any other depiction.

church community means a parish or church organization in which ministry is undertaken.

church worker means clergy, lay ministers (Readers), and lay workers.

clergy means bishops, priests and deacons of the church.

clericalism means clergy encouraging and taking advantage of deference to them.

complainant means a person who makes a complaint that they were abused or a person making a complaint on behalf of the primary victim.

complaint means a complaint of abuse against a church worker.

concealment of abuse means the failure without reasonable excuse to disclose known or suspected abuse by a church worker to the church authority or civil authority.

civil authority means the police or other authority to which a report of known or suspected abuse may or should be made.

cyber abuse occurs where a church worker engages in behaviour involving the use of technology which harms or threatens to harm a person socially, psychologically or physically. It can take place in various online spaces, like chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails, messaging apps or on message boards. It includes a range of behaviours which are sometimes described as 'cyberbullying', 'cyberstalking', and 'image-based abuse'.

emotional abuse occurs where a church worker engages in behaviour directed to a person where the person suffers, or is likely to suffer, harm to their health and safety. It includes:

- making derogatory, demeaning or belittling comments, jokes or gestures about someone's appearance, lifestyle, background, or capability;
- ridiculing a person, including the use of insulting or derogatory terms to refer to them; and
- coercing, manipulating, threatening or intimidating a person.

It does not consist of conduct of a church worker carried out in a reasonable manner, such as:

- disagreeing with or criticising someone's beliefs or opinions or actions in an honest and respectful way;
- giving information about inappropriate behaviour in an objective way to the person or people concerned and to any other person with a proper reason for having that information; and
- taking legitimate disciplinary action.

Emotional abuse is commonly called ‘psychological abuse’.

financial abuse occurs where a church worker seeks personal advantage or financial gain for themselves or their family from their position or from a ministry relationship, beyond their stipend or wage and recognised allowances. It includes soliciting a gift, whether monetary or otherwise, from a person with whom there is a ministry relationship. Where it involves theft, it will constitute a criminal offence.

gender-based violence means any act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and is based on harmful gender norms and unequal power relationships. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men and boys.

grooming occurs where a church worker deliberately undertakes actions with the aim of engaging and influencing an adult or a child or young person for the purpose of sexual activity. In the case of a child or young person, the church worker may groom them and those close to them, such as parents, family members and other church workers, with the aim of having sexual activity with the child or young person. In the case of an adult, the church worker may groom the adult and those close to the adult such as family members, other church workers and church communities, with the aim of having sexual activity with the adult. Grooming commonly precedes other forms of sexual abuse and can involve contact involving the use of technology to build the relationship with the child or adult.

harassment occurs where a church worker engages in unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, towards another person where the person feels with good reason offended, belittled or threatened. This behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes:

- making unwelcome physical contact with a person;
- making gestures or using language that could reasonably give offence, including continual and unwarranted shouting;
- making unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person’s capacities or attributes;
- putting on open display pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials that could reasonably give offence;
- making unwelcome communication with a person in any form such as phone calls, email, text messages; and
- stalking a person.

‘Cyberstalking’ is a form of harassment which involves the use of technology such as sending text messages and emails.

image-based abuse occurs where a church worker engages in the taking of, distribution of, or threat to distribute, intimate, nude and/or sexual images of another person without their consent. The images may be original and photoshopped photos, drawn pictures, and videos. It is called ‘sexting’ when technology is used to distribute the image. It is called ‘sextortion’ when the church worker tries to get sexual favours, money or something else, by

threatening to reveal intimate images of the other person, or requests money, additional images, or sexual favours for removing the images online.

lay worker means a lay person who:

- is authorised by the bishop of a diocese;
- is appointed, elected or employed by or on behalf of a church community; or
- as a volunteer, undertakes ministry in the church.

ministry means the work involved or the situation which exists when a church worker has responsibility as part of their role for the wellbeing of others.

ministry relationship means a relationship between a church worker and any person for the purposes of ministry.

ministry suitability information means a written statement by a church authority of a province about a church worker that discloses whether or not there has been, and, if there has, the substance of any allegation, charge, finding or admission of the commission of a criminal offence, or the breach of the province's rules regarding the conduct of church workers, including rules relating to sexual conduct and conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults.

neglect occurs when a church worker with responsibility for the welfare of another person fails without reasonable excuse to provide the basic necessities of life, so that the person's physical or mental health and development are placed at risk of harm. It includes being deprived of:

- food;
- clothing;
- shelter;
- hygiene;
- education;
- supervision and safety; and
- medical care.

Neglect can occur in a variety of situations such as a care home or day-care centre for vulnerable adults, a camp or residential facility or day-care centre for children and young people, a boarding house in a school, a hospital or a health clinic.

physical abuse occurs where a church worker commits an intentional or reckless act, uses force or threatens to use force causing injury to, or involving unwelcome physical contact with, another person. It includes:

- slapping;
- hitting;
- punching;
- shaking;
- choking;
- kicking;

- burning;
- shoving; and
- grabbing.

It does not include corporal punishment of a child where this is lawful.

primary victim means the person who has been abused.

Protocol means the *Protocol for disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion*.

province refers to a member church of the Anglican Consultative Council. A national or local church which is under the direct metropolitan jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury is considered to be a province for the purpose of these guidelines.

respondent means a church worker or participant in the life of the Church against whom a complaint has been made.

safe church or **safeguarding** means policies and practices to promote the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of all persons within the church, including children, young people and vulnerable adults.

secondary victim means other people who have suffered harm as a result of the abuse of the primary victim. They will be likely to include members of their family of the primary victim as well as members of the family of the abuser, other church workers and members of the church.

sexual abuse occurs where a church worker engages in any of the following conduct:

- grooming;
- image-based abuse;
- sexual assault;
- sexual exploitation;
- sexual harassment; or
- viewing, possessing, producing or distributing child pornography.

sexual assault occurs where a church worker engages in any intentional or reckless act, uses force or threatens to use force involving some form of sexual activity against a person without their consent, or with their consent in circumstances where consent is not a defence to such sexual activity under the applicable laws. Children who are under the age of consent, or any adult on their behalf, cannot consent to sexual activity. Sexual assault will normally constitute a criminal offence and includes:

- rape;
- touching a person in a sexual manner; and
- inviting, inducing, inciting or forcing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to touch themselves, the church worker or another person in a sexual manner.

sexual exploitation occurs where a church worker, who has a ministry relationship with an adult or child who is over the age of consent, invites them to engage in sexual activity, or engages in sexual activity with them with their consent. It does not matter that the adult or child made the invitation or initiated the sexual activity.

sexual harassment occurs where a church worker makes an unwelcome sexual advance, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours, to a person. It may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time, and may involve different forms of communication such as phone calls, email, text messages and social media. It includes:

- asking for sex;
- making gestures, jokes or comments containing sexual references; and
- showing sexually explicit material.

spiritual abuse occurs where a church worker mistreats a person by actions or threats when justified by appeal to God, faith or religion. It includes:

- using a position of spiritual authority to dominate or manipulate another person or group;
- using a position of spiritual authority to seek inappropriate deference from others;
- ostracising a person from their church community;
- isolating a person from friends and family members; and
- using biblical or religious terminology to justify abuse.

vulnerable adult means an adult who by reason of an intellectual disability, mental illness or other impairment, age or other circumstance, has reduced capacity, whether permanently or temporarily, to protect themselves from abuse. This includes any adult who:

- is ministered to in their home;
- is dependent on one or more persons for support such as in the case of an accident, illness or birth of a child;
- experiences a life crisis or natural disaster, such as the death of a family member or loss of employment, or loss of home and possessions; and
- through poverty, war or civil strife, displacement, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender, or other social and cultural factors has a diminished ability to protect themselves from abuse.

young people means people in a country where a distinction is made between children and young people who are not a child and have not attained their majority. In some countries they are people over the age of 16 years and under the age of 18 years.

Appendix 2: Resources for Parishes

Please also see the Diocesan website for further resources and guidance. [Safeguarding – Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf](#)

Parish of [insert name] Policy Statement Safeguarding: Protecting the Vulnerable

The Church Council of [insert name] fully recognises and accepts the Policy Statement of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf 'Safeguarding: Protecting the Vulnerable' and commits to complying with the Diocesan safeguarding policy and code of practice. We shall also comply with legal requirements relating to children and young people and adults experiencing or at risk of harm, abuse or neglect within the jurisdiction of [insert name of political jurisdiction].

1. We are committed to:

- Promoting a Safe Church culture within our Parish and in our Parish activities by adhering to safe working practices and acknowledge the principle that no form of exploitation of a vulnerable person can ever be consistent with Christian principles.
- Ensuring that any organisation renting/using our premises for activities involving children, young people or vulnerable adults is aware of our Safeguarding Policy, and aware of their own responsibilities to have appropriate safeguarding policies and processes in place.
- Ensuring that all who participate in the life of the church may do so in safety and free from harm.
- Exercising proper care in the appointment and selection of all those with any responsibilities related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church. References will be required and a role description issued.
- Ensuring that those appointed are aware of the Diocesan and Parish Safeguarding Policies and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. We will support them by ensuring they receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role and that they are fully aware of and have access to the Code of Practice.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation in accordance with the child and adult safeguarding procedures.
- Ensuring that any complaint made regarding a vulnerable person, who may have been harmed or is in significant danger, will be reported immediately and we will fully cooperate with any investigation into allegations concerning a member of the church community or any other person.

- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those who may pose a present risk to others.

2. Parish Safeguarding Officer

We will ensure that there is an identified lay person/s to be the Parish Safeguarding Officer/s who will be suitably recruited and trained, who is/are aware of their role and responsibilities, and who will be the point of contact for any concerns.

We have appointed [insert safeguarding rep(s) names here] as our Parish Safeguarding Officer/s.

3. Guidance

Copies of Diocesan and parish guidelines and procedures are held by the Parish Priest and Parish Safeguarding Officer.

These are also available on the Parish website and displayed where possible.

Copies have been made available to organisations using church premises, who must either adopt this policy, or have an equivalent policy.

4. Review

This policy will be formally reviewed annually by the Church Council and a copy shared with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

5. Date of Adoption

This Policy has been approved by the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

The Church Council agreed and adopted the above Policy at its meeting on

The date of the next review will be agreed at the first Church Council meeting following the ACM.

Signed

Priest

Churchwarden

Churchwarden

Date

Overview of Good Parish Practice

Safeguarding: Protecting the Vulnerable

Churches need to be aware of risk and to have procedures for managing risk.

This means looking at every aspect of ministry and church life and making sure that the risk of abuse or exploitation has been minimized.

1. Recruitment should include these elements:

- A clear description of the role needs to be provided.
- DBS or equivalent and any Sex Offenders Register will be checked.
- References are required.
- All appointments will be subject to a proper review process.

See Appendix 3: Safer Recruitment (& Diocesan website) for guidance and resources

2. Supervision of Children

- There should always be at least one adult (18+ years of age) and one helper (16+ years of age) present with children.
- In addition, a ratio of 1 adult to 8 children is the minimum for work in safe and manageable environments, with children of school age.
- For younger age groups that ratio will need to increase. It will also need to increase for activities 'off-site' or for residential events.
- If there are only two adults present, they should not be from the same family. A gender balance may also be desirable.
- No adult should work with children alone in a 'closed' setting. Children should not travel in cars with only one adult.

3. Health and Safety

Health and Safety is distinct from Safeguarding: Protecting the Vulnerable, but equally important. The following health and safety issues must be considered when working with children and young people:

- All church premises must be as safe as possible, bearing in mind the ages of any children or young people involved.
- A proper risk assessment should be made for all activities that will include children, and young people. This assessment must cover all church premises where children and young people may enter during such activities. Leaders must have a copy of the assessment or at least be aware of its conclusions.
- A register of attendance for each group is essential, including the names of leaders and helpers.
- Fire exits and fire equipment are to be marked, and the procedure for an emergency evacuation known by adults leading and supervising.

- A first aid kit must be readily available and Councils should ensure that there are sufficient people available with the appropriate training to use it.
- An accident/incident book should be readily available and inspected on a quarterly basis.
- For off-site activities, best practice is to involve leaders in the planning of the event at every stage.

4. The Parents'/Guardians' Role

It is essential that parents and legal guardians understand that they have a role to play in the protection of their children and young people whilst taking part in activities on church premises. The following is the minimum requirement:

- Consent is required for any child or young person attending a particular activity.
- A contact number is required, which will be active at all times.
- The leader must be informed of any allergies or health issues that affect their child.
- A form must be produced that clearly describes the activity for which consent is being sought.

(See page 22) for an example format of a Consent Form that includes all the above requirements.)

5. Reporting

- Each Parish must appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO).
- Any suspicion, allegation or discovery of abuse will be made in the first instance to that person.
- The PSO will listen carefully to the allegation and record what was said.
- The PSO will decide who else needs to be informed immediately at local level, including involving the police if necessary and will report their findings to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.
- The DSO will appoint an investigating officer (IO) who will carry out an investigation according to best practice, and will report back to the DSO.
- The DSO will determine what further action to take, consulting with senior clergy and civil authorities as appropriate.
- The bishop and/or archdeacon will take steps to ensure that pastoral care is offered to all concerned.
- On occasion, a priest or other church officer or participant may be party to information about an incident which falls short of the definition of allegation. This should be brought to the attention of the PSO.
- If the PSO becomes aware through their own discreet enquiries, that this feeling is more general, but that no-one is prepared to be named in an allegation, the PSO and or the parish priest should report the matter to the Archdeacon. The normal outcome would be a conversation between the Archdeacon and the person of concern.

- If necessary, a strategy should be devised, describing any constraints upon the person involved and this should be regularly monitored. Confidential notes should be kept by the PSO, and especially of any strategy put in place.
- The following should be noted:
Hearsay and rumour are not always a question of 'no smoke without fire,' and reputational damage to individuals from 'whispering campaigns' that have other motives is well documented. Confidentiality is therefore extremely important, but should not interfere with rigorous examination.

If the rumours relate to children and young people, it is important that they are examined as if they were allegations.

Irrespective of other processes, the Archdeacon may conclude that if there is a possibility the Guidelines for the Conduct of Ministry have been transgressed, there may be a case to invoke the Disciplinary Procedure of the Diocese.

6. Training

The Parish Safeguarding Officer must regularly attend the required safeguarding training and will be responsible for organising regular training opportunities at a parish level.

7. Organisations using Church Premises

It is expected that organisations using church premises must either sign up to the church Safeguarding policy or have an equivalent policy of their own.

The church's policy should be readily available and prominently displayed with the contact details of the PSO.

8. Care of offenders

On occasion, the Priest may become aware that someone with a (spent) conviction of abuse against a child, young person or other vulnerable person, or someone against whom allegations have been made, wishes to join the congregation.

The Priest and the Parish Safeguarding Officer must be informed if information to this effect is received by others and they will consult with Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

Best practice, after discussion with the DSO, is for the Priest and the person involved to agree to a simple set of ground rules about their participation in church life, that will not place them or others at increased risk.

A careful decision must be made about who else needs to share in the information, in the best interests of all concerned.

Pastoral Care with Children and Young People

Usually this will happen in a corporate setting, perhaps within public worship. In other circumstances the following should be observed:

Basic Principles

- Always have the health and well-being of the child or young person at the heart and exercise your Ministry in a way that protects them.
- Never arrange to see a child or young person on your own. Always make sure there is another adult close by and in sight.
- Only those authorised by the church should carry out this Ministry (e.g. Priests and appointed youth leaders).
- Ensure that the child or young person feels welcomed, valued and accepted. Always respect the dignity of the child or young person and keep in mind their best interests and concerns.
- It is important to set the boundaries from the outset, by explaining to the child or young person that everything they talk about is confidential, unless they tell you something that puts them in danger or that is legally required to be reported.
- Respect the issues that the child or young person brings to you.
- Use appropriate ways of asking questions that enable the child or young person to talk. Always use open questions that enable them to say how they feel. Do not be afraid of silence.
- Know when to bring the session to an end.
- Adopt appropriate body language, touch and posture, especially if the child or young person is upset. Avoid anything that is or could be interpreted as inappropriate.
- The Sacramental Ministry of anointing should only to be carried out by an authorised person.
- When praying with children or young people choose your words carefully so that the prayer reflects the concerns that the child or young person has brought and offers them affirmation and comfort.
- Some children or young people will come to you when they are upset or crying, others may get upset or emotional whilst they are talking with you. The child or young person's emotions need to be respected and dealt with sensitively, acknowledging for example that it is alright to cry or express their anxiety or sadness. However, you should see that person through the crying and take time before moving on, to agree together on what will happen next. Ask them to repeat what you have agreed, so that you know they have understood.

- Sometimes people want to talk to you or make a confession about something that has happened to them. Some people will come to you with a feeling of guilt for something that has happened which was not their fault, so it is important to tell them explicitly that what they have experienced is not a sin on their part, and it was not their fault.
- Always talk to and discuss with a child or young person or if appropriate the carer any action you may have to take. If you have reservations about this, ask yourself why this child or young person has decided to tell you something in the first place. It may be their way of asking for help.

Follow Up

- It may be that you will need follow up sessions with the person concerned. Again, these need to have boundaries – both in terms of time in and acknowledging what you can do. You may get to a stage when you need to commend the individual to someone else who can help them with a specific issue. Ask the child or young person if they would like you to talk to someone about the issue they have raised so that it can be followed up and they can continue to receive the support that they need.
- Do not make promises that you will not or cannot keep, for example do not tell children or young people you will follow up something then fail to do so.
- If you are out of your depth with a particular issue they have shared then acknowledge this by telling the child or young person and getting their permission for you to talk to someone who can help you understand.
- Children or young people can easily become attached to or dependent on someone who is helping them so you must be disciplined about the time you spend with them and the access they have to you. Work within the boundaries that have been set.
- Sometimes it may be appropriate to ask the child or young person if they think their parents need to be involved or informed about a particular issue, or if the child or young person should be encouraged to talk to them. Remember the child or young person's family and home situation, as well as the age of the child or young person and the issue involved. You may want to ask the child or young person if you could talk to their parents.

Organising Off-site Activities for Children and Young People

Any residential event organised for children and young people will involve taking responsibility for their well-being, being prepared for any eventuality, anticipating situations where there could be possible harm and taking steps to minimise risks. Before any residential event the leader must carry out a risk assessment of the venue and activities. The following areas must be considered:

- Check that the venue has a **Child and Young Person's** Protection Policy, including risk assessment policy for:
 - Identification of hazards
 - Who might be harmed and how this might happen
 - Fire procedures/exits
 - Assess the risks and take action to remove or avoid them
 - Record the details of the risk assessment and make it available to the other leaders and to the parent/carer/guardian of the child or young person.
- The activity/event organiser, including events organised by other churches, must have a Child and Young Person's Protection Policy Statement in line with that of the Diocese. The Child & Young Person's Protection Policy Statement must set out clearly the child protection procedure that will be followed at the event, and must also be written down and agreed. A Child and Young Person's Protection Co-ordinator must be appointed for the event.
- The Policy Statement must contain details of the procedure to be followed for dealing with suspicion or allegations of abuse and must give a clear reporting line. This must include the names and contact details of the persons to be contacted within each of the participating organisations.
- All parents/guardians, and in certain circumstances carers, must receive full information of the venue, travelling arrangements, activities, supervision etc and must give written permission for their child/children and young person to attend. A sample parental consent form can be found below.
- Where camps are organised with workers from different organisations or denominations, it is important that all use the same forms and procedures when recruiting leaders.
- All leaders must be given the opportunity to meet together before the activity/event to discuss the programme, activities, child and young person's protection arrangements and health and safety provisions. The child and young person's protection policy for the duration of the activity/event must be clearly understood. A daily log of all activities must be kept by the group leaders and any significant incidents recorded.
- It is the responsibility of the leaders to know the whereabouts of every child and young person who is attending the activity/event at all times.
- General safety rules should be explained to all attending the activity/event before it commences.
- A Health Information and Consent Form must be completed for every child and young person who will be attending. No child or young person must be allowed to

attend the activity/event without a completed form. The forms must be held by the group leader in case of emergency. All forms will be destroyed on return from activity/event. If swimming is to be undertaken, this must be included on the form. It is important to ascertain who can swim unaided.

- The activity/event organiser must ensure adequate first aid facilities including first aid boxes. All accidents and injuries must be recorded. Any medication brought by a child or young person is the responsibility of the first aider and suitable storage must be provided. Such medication must always be available to the child and young person (e.g. do not forget inhalers if a trip is planned away from the activity or event location).
- Arrangements for sleeping must be considered carefully. Adults should not share sleeping accommodation with children and young people. However, adults should be near at hand and accessible at night in case of an emergency. The children and young people should be made aware of where adults are sleeping. Adults should not enter sleeping accommodation of the children and young people alone.
- It is important that the activity/event organiser ensures that there is adequate insurance cover for all eventualities such as personal accident (e.g. death or disablement), lost or stolen property and personal liability. If the activity/event is being held at a centre it is important to establish that there is appropriate Public Liability Insurance at that centre.
- Group leaders must follow the advice given in respect of taking and using photographic or digital images of children and young people.

Note Much of the guidance above could also be relevant to off-site activities with vulnerable adults.

Parent/Legal Guardian Consent Form - Visits and Activities

Name of participant

Church/group:

Proposed visit/activity:

Date of visit/activity:

Departure place and time:

Return place and time:

Cost: (cheque made payable to ...)

Transport arrangements:

Items to be brought:

Consent form to be returned by:

I give permission for: [Full Name]

to take part in the visit/activity

to be included in photographs

I give my consent to any medical treatment that may be necessary in the event of an emergency. I

enclose a cheque/cash for the sum of ... :

Signature of parent/guardian:

Date:

Emergency contact telephone number:

Name, address and telephone number of family doctor:

Please indicate if you wish your child to be withdrawn from any of the activities/adventure activities

PLEASE GIVE INFORMATION BELOW OF ANY SPECIFIC ALLERGIES, MEDICAL OR DIETARY NEEDS:

Images of Children and Young People

Consent is necessary before making and using images of children or young people. It is very important to take particular care when making images of children and young people, as there may be instances whereby there are very good reasons for the refusal of a parent or guardian for the taking or use of images (e.g. the child may be the subject of a legal dispute or in authority care where the whereabouts of a child or young person must not be widely known). It is also very important to take care in naming children and young people when publishing images, because doing so may make them a target for potential abusers and in the case of digital images these could be manipulated for child pornography. Young people should be warned of the dangers of taking photographs at church events and putting them in the public domain through social media.

Parental Consent

The consent of parents/guardians for children and young people is required before making images. Consent in writing should be obtained prior to publication in a newsletter, notice board or on the Internet. If an event such as a church service or nativity play is to be photographed, advance warning should be given to allow a parent or guardian to remove a child or young person from view of the camera. This also allows the parent or guardian to contact the leader afterwards to ensure that the image of their child or young person is not published in any form.

General Rules

The following general rules must be observed regarding images of children and young people.

- Whenever possible each child or young person should be part of a group.
- If names are to be published only the first name of a child or young person should be used.
- Should a child or young person be named in full an image of the individual should not be used.
- Avoid images of scantily clad children or young people. If this is unavoidable (e.g. if they are swimming), only group images should be used and full body or face shots must be avoided.
- Information should be given if the image is to be retained for future use.
- The image must be securely stored and disposed of/deleted when no longer required.

The Conduct of Pastoral Ministry among Vulnerable Adults

Code of Conduct for all those exercising pastoral ministry:

1. Particular care must be exercised when ministering to persons with whom the church worker (**church worker** means clergy, lay ministers and workers, including volunteers) has a close personal relationship or family relationship.
2. Church workers should be aware of dependency in pastoral and professional relationships and seek advice or supervision when these concerns arise.
3. Church workers should recognise their limits and not undertake any ministry which is beyond their competence or role, e.g. therapeutic, counselling, counselling victims of abuse, domestic violence or their perpetrators or giving legal advice. Where the vulnerable adult identifies a need for such support then it should be referred to another person or agency with the appropriate expertise.
4. Church workers should avoid behaviour that could give the impression of inappropriate favouritism or the encouragement of inappropriate special relationships.
5. Church workers should never seek any personal advantage or gain by virtue of their ministry with vulnerable adults. Extreme care must be exercised about accepting personal gifts from those in receipt of pastoral ministry. Church workers must not encourage people to give, lend or bequeath money or gifts which will either directly or indirectly benefit them or their family. Church workers must not accept offers of gifts and should ensure that, where a gift has been offered, the Parish Council is informed.
6. Church workers should treat those with whom they minister or visit with respect, encouraging self-determination, independence and choice.
7. Care should be taken when helping with physical needs, always respecting the dignity and choices of the person involved.
8. Pastoral relationships may develop into romantic attachments and such situations should be handled sensitively. Church workers should recognise such a development and make it clear to both the person concerned and a supervisor or colleague. Alternative arrangements will need to be made for the ongoing pastoral care of the individual.
9. Church workers must not undertake pastoral ministry when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. If a church worker suspects a vulnerable adult of being abused or suspects another worker of using their position of trust inappropriately then there is a duty to report that suspicion to the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
11. It is desirable that under normal circumstances pastoral visits to vulnerable adults should not be made by unaccompanied individuals.
12. Anyone involved in a Lay Pastoral Ministry must sign a form to the effect that they have read, and understood these Guidelines and abide by them.

Appendix 3: Safer Recruitment for Parishes

Safer Recruitment practices aim to:

- Attract the best possible individuals for the role.
- Deter individuals who are unsuitable from applying.
- Identify and reject individuals who are unsuitable.
- Identify and address any concerns post-appointment.

Resources available on the Diocesan website to support Safer Recruitment:

Safeguarding – Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf

Volunteer role description template

Volunteer application form

Example interview questions

Volunteer reference request template

Disclosure and barring (UK)

Risk assessment template

Volunteer appointment letter template

Volunteer induction checklist

Volunteer support meeting agenda template

Safer recruitment people management (notes)

Safer recruitment record-keeping template

Other Safer Recruitment resources follow on the next page

Personal Reference

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL (when completed) DIOCESE OF CYPRUS AND THE GULF [Insert Parish title and address]

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

In order to assist in the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults, who may be associated in some capacity with parishes throughout the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, the parishes operate a policy of authorising specific individuals to work within areas of potential contact with such people. Part of the process for granting such authorisation is to obtain two personal references from close associates (who may not be family members) of those applying.

You have been nominated as a personal referee by _____
[insert name of person involved], who is applying to work in such a position of potential contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, which is:
_____ [insert position involved] within the parish named above.

In acting as a personal referee, you will be certifying that this person is a fit and proper person to work within a position that may have potential contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. You will also be certifying that, to your knowledge, there is nothing from either a criminal or personal perspective in this person's background that you are aware of that would bar him/her from contact with such people.

If you are aware of any such misgivings, or if you feel unable for any other reason to provide a personal reference, you should decline to do so and then return this form to the originator please.

Reference

I have known _____ [insert name of person involved] for _____ years [insert period of knowledge, which should be at least one year].

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, he/she is a fit and proper person to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.

Name:

Signature:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email:

Date:

Please return the completed form to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), who is: [Insert name of SO]

Role description form

This form should be completed for all workers with children and young people or vulnerable adults. If the role changes substantially a new form should be completed. Copies should be retained by the worker, the Parish Priest and the SO.

To be completed on behalf of the Church Council

Name of group (e.g. Sunday School):

Name of worker:

Age range of participants:

Person to whom responsible (e.g. Youth Group Leader):

Where/when they meet:

Work to be undertaken:

Signed (on behalf of the Church Council):

To be completed by the worker with children and young people or vulnerable adults

I understand the nature of the work I am to do with children and young people/vulnerable people. I have read and understood the Diocesan Policy Statement and Code of Practice for safeguarding children and young people and vulnerable adults. I understand that it is my duty to protect the children and young people and vulnerable adults with whom I come into contact. I know what action to take if abuse is discovered or disclosed.

Signed:

Date:

All job descriptions will be consistent with the generic job descriptions for various kinds of ministry, published by the Diocese from time to time.

Question to be included in any appointment process

Applicants from jurisdictions that provide them (e.g. the UK) should be required to produce their current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate or equivalent. If a DBS certificate (or equivalent) is not available for any reason, applicants must obtain the endorsement of two people (who may not be family members) whom they have known personally for at least one year, in the format provided above. The following questions must invariably be addressed to applicants immediately following application:

Have you ever been convicted of, charged with or investigated for, or received any warning or caution for an offence covered by this policy.

YES/NO (N.B. The disclosure of an offence may not be a bar to your appointment)

Nature of offence:

Date of offence:

Please give the names and addresses of two referees from whom the parish may seek information regarding your suitability for appointment:

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email address:

Occupation:

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email address:

Occupation: