



**CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF THE MISSIONS**  
**POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**  
**IN UK**

**September 2018/ Revised August 2019/**

*Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions, 108 Spencer Road, Wealdstone, HA3 7AR Middlesex*

*Tel: 020-8427-5783 Registered Charity No. 233599*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

We, the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions commit ourselves to working always to maintain attitudes of respect, care, support and encouragement in our communities, ministries and in all other institutions in which we live and work. As a missionary Congregation which began in 1861 in France, we have sent sisters all over the world but we are proud to know that our first presence in Ireland was in 1929 (Limavady, Co Derry) where we opened a school and later in 1952, we began our mission in Churchtown, Dublin. Our missionary Charism is based on the vision of our Foundress Euphrasie Barbier, who in her directives written in 1871 states:

“The sisters will have for one another a profound esteem and sincere affection based on one’s talents or natural qualities, not on purely human sympathies, but on God . . . They will be attentive that everything in their words, actions and mutual relations bears witness to their esteem and cordiality, without distinction of country or of character, in such a way that each sister can count on the simplicity, candour; sincere affection and love of her sisters.”  
*Euphrasie Barbier. Directory, Dec 1871. (Constitutions pg 50).*

In putting together this policy on Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults, it is our hope and desire to live out the aspirations expressed by our Foundress, in our relationships with all those whose lives we touch every day.

## **AIM**

The Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions (subsequently referred to as ‘The charity’) are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. All sisters and employees have a duty to be alert to potential vulnerabilities in children and adults, and know what to do if they have concerns.

All sisters and employees are expected to understand and implement The Charity’s safeguarding policy and procedures.

When a sister or employee works/volunteers for a third-party organisation, diocese or charity, she must ensure that she has a working knowledge of its Safeguarding Policy.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all sisters and employees in The Charity are:

1. Aware of their role and responsibilities for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults; and
2. Understand the processes and procedures to follow to ensure a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults; and
3. Understand the action to take in the event of becoming aware of or having concerns that abuse has occurred or is occurring.

## OBJECTIVES

To ensure that all sisters and employees:

- Are able to **identify** a safeguarding or potential safeguarding issue
- Understand their **role and responsibilities** in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults experiencing harm or abuse.
- Understand **when and how** to raise a safeguarding “concern”
- Understand **how to access advice and support** in regard to individual cases
- Ensure Care Home employees have access to **more detailed policies and guidance** to cover the specific circumstances and environment in which they work.

## THE POLICY STATEMENT

It is policy of The Charity to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, all forms of exploitation and provide a safe environment for them.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everybody’s responsibility: **doing nothing is NOT acceptable.**

This commitment flows from our common belief in the dignity and uniqueness of every human life.

This policy is **based** on the principle that each child and vulnerable adult has a right to expect the highest level of care and protection, encouragement and respect.

## ROLE AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF TRUSTEES

The Charity is registered with the Charity Commission of England & Wales – Charity Registration Number 233599.

The Trustees of The Charity are ultimately responsible for ensuring that those benefitting from, working with or belonging to The Charity are not harmed in any way through contact with it. The Trustees have a legal duty to act prudently and take all reasonable steps within their powers to ensure that this does not happen. They have a duty to ensure that there is an appropriate policy in place, which is updated annually and monitored by the Safeguarding Lead and the Provincial Team. The policy will also be updated within the year should there be significant developments or changes. An amended policy will be approved by the Trustees prior to its distribution through the Province. The Trustees will report to the Charity Commission of England & Wales and other relevant Legislative Bodies, any serious incident which could adversely affect The Charity’s beneficiaries, work, financial position, or reputation.

The Charity is an individual Charitable Trust covered by a Public Liability Insurance Policy. The Trustees have a responsibility to ensure that the terms of the Public Liability Insurance Policy are compiled with and that these National Procedures are fully operational.

## **LEGISLATION**

In applying this policy, the Charity seeks to work within English and Scottish law, national and local safeguarding policies and procedures, together with recent recommendations of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales and Scotland, and to comply in all respects with statutory and Church agencies to ensure that any allegations of abuse are promptly and properly dealt with, victims supported and perpetrators held to account.

## **THE CHARITY'S COMMITMENTS**

We will:

- Apply the Principles and Procedures demanded by national and local legislation as well as those laid out by the NCSC (National Catholic Safeguarding Commission), CSAS (Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service) and the Diocese of Westminster in England and Wales, and the Bishop's Conference in Scotland.
- Adopt the necessary means to create and maintain a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults in our care.
- Ensure all Sisters in active ministry and staff in our employment undergo checks required (e.g. Disclosure and barring Service (England and Wales); Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) etc.) in order to be eligible for service to children or vulnerable adults.
- Provide initial and ongoing Safeguarding Training for all Sisters, and employees and ensure that all Sisters and employees have read and have access to the safeguarding Policy.
- Ensure regular monitoring and updating of the application of all the above elements, insofar as they relate to the protection of children and vulnerable adults for whom the Sisters and their employees are responsible for or are in contact with.

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing harm to Children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process; it focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Safeguarding children and child protection applies to all children up to the age of 18.

## SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

‘Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both risk and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstance.’

*Care and Support Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017*

## CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

The following tables are examples of types of abuse of children and vulnerable adults. Sisters and employees should not be limited in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect. They should seek further advice and guidance if they see or come to know of a situation which makes them feel uncomfortable.

### EXAMPLE OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN

**SEE APPENDIX 1**

Bullying and cyberbullying	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	Neglect
Child Trafficking	Physical Abuse
Domestic Abuse	Radicalisation of Children & Young Adults
Emotional Abuse	Sexual Abuse

### EXAMPLES OF ABUSE IN ADULTS

Disability Hate	Organisational Abuse & Institutional Abuse
Discriminatory Abuse	Physical Abuse
Domestic Abuse (including ‘Honour’ based violence)	Restraint
Emotional & Psychological Abuse	Self-Neglect
Financial & material Abuse	Sexual Abuse
Modern Slavery & Trafficking	Spiritual Abuse
Neglect & Acts of Omission	Bullying & Cyberbullying

## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH A SAFEGUARDING ALLEGATION

- **RESPONDING TO THE PERSON MAKING AN ALLEGATION**

The person receiving an allegation will listen and will take the allegation very seriously; they will not express disbelief. They will explain the actions that are required by The Charity and keep the person updated. They will not promise confidentiality, but state that the alleged victim's wishes will be considered by professionals. Pastoral support will be offered.

**The immediate safety of the child or adult is paramount. If there is an obvious need for medical attention and/or the assailant is in the immediate area, call 999.**

**Receive:**

Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.

Take it seriously.

**Reassure:**

Reassure the child/adult, but only so far as is honest and reliable and so not make promises which cannot be kept.

Don't promise confidentiality. You have a duty to report your concerns.

**React:**

Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Do not investigate.

Remember that an allegation of abuse may lead to a criminal investigation.

Let the child/adult explain to you in his own words what happened, don't ask leading questions.

Do ask open questions like, "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

Do not ask the child/adult to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff.

Explain what you have to do next and with whom you have to talk.

**Record: See Appendix 2**

Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up in detail as soon as possible.

Do not destroy your original notes which may be required by a Court.

Record the date, time, place, words used by the child/adult and how the child/adult appeared to you – be specific.

Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang.

Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.

**Report:**

Report directly to the designated safeguarding lead for 'The Charity'.

This must be done as soon as practicable and in all cases within 4 hours.

**The safeguarding Lead for England:**

Catherine Burke

Email: [cburkefailte@hotmail.com](mailto:cburkefailte@hotmail.com)

Phone: 0118 984 2166

**The safeguarding Lead for Scotland:**

Sister Mary Frances Collett

Email: [mcollett4@googlemail.com](mailto:mcollett4@googlemail.com)

Phone: 01505 613 514

***ACTION TAKEN BY SAFEGUARDING LEAD ON RECEIPT OF AN ALLEGATION***

On receipt of an allegation whether historic or current, made against a Sister also known as a Sister of Our Lady of the Missions (living or deceased) or an employee of The Charity (current or past).

The Safeguarding Lead will then inform the following:

- The Provincial of The Charity.
- The Police.
- Diocese of Westminster including completing the CM1 form, Safeguarding Plan and Risk Assessment.
- The Charity Commission for England and Wales.
- The office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) if the origin of the allegation is Scotland.
- Solicitor (where appropriate).

***RESPONDING TO A SISTER AGAINST WHOM AN ALLEGATION HAS BEEN MADE***

The Provincial will speak with the named sister, to inform her of the allegation and allow her the opportunity to recall the person making the allegation, the venue and her memory of that time.

The Provincial will offer pastoral support to the sister.

The procedures outlined by Westminster Diocese will be followed.

Should an allegation be made against the Provincial Leader, she will be suspended until an investigation has taken place and she will be given the necessary support she requires.

***RESPONDING TO A CURRENT EMPLOYEE AGAINST WHOM AN ALLEGATION HAS BEEN MADE***

The Safeguarding Lead will speak with the named employees to inform him/her of the allegation and allow him/her the opportunity to recall the person making the allegation, the venue and his/her memory of that time.

Pastoral support will be offered to the employee.

The procedures outlined by Westminster Diocese will be followed.

***RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION AGAINST A DECEASED SISTER/FORMER SISTER/EMPLOYEE***

The procedures outlined by Westminster Diocese will be followed.

***RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION WITHIN THE SETTING OF A CARE HOME***

The policy of the particular Home will be followed.

## APPENDIX 1

## TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

Bullying & Cyber bullying	Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. Cyberbullying takes place online and can involve social networks, games and mobile devices.
Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)	Is a form of sexual abuse. Young people in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities. Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.
Child Trafficking	Involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.
Domestic Abuse	Is any type of controlling, bullying threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or were in an intimate relationship. Domestic abuse can happen in any relationship regardless of age, sexuality, gender identity, race or religious identity.
Emotional Abuse	Is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child's emotional health and development.
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	Is the partial or removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting.
Neglect	Is the persistent failing to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development.
Physical Abuse	This happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns, and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.
Sexual Abuse	Is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.
Radicalisation of Children & Young Adults	<b>Radicalisation</b> is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups. There is no obvious profile likely to become involved in extremism or a single indicator of when a person might move to adopt violence in support of extremist ideas. This process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended period or within a very short time frame. <b>Extremism</b> is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011). Violent extremism is a real threat to all communities – violent extremists actively aim to damage community relations and create division. That is why it is vital that we all work together to support those who are vulnerable in this way.



## TYPES OF ADULT ABUSE

Disability Hate	The Criminal Justice System defines a disability hate crime as any criminal offence, which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability or perceived disability. The police monitor 5 strands of hate crime, disability; race; religion; sexual orientation; transgender.
Discriminatory Abuse	Discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or comments based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment. Excluding a person from activities on the basis they are "not liked" is also discriminatory abuse.
Domestic Abuse (including 'Honour' based violence)	The cross Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: "Any incident of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: financial, psychological, physical, sexual, and emotional. Honour based violence and abuse can take many forms, e.g. threatening behaviour, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, threats to kill and false imprisonment committed due to so called 'honour'. Murders in the name of so called honour are murders in which predominantly women are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour which is deemed to have brought shame on the family. Some examples nationally of honour based murders have been for trivial reasons; dressing or behaving too westernised, falling in love with someone not chosen by family, rejecting forced marriage or being LGBT.
Emotional & Psychological Abuse	Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.
Physical Abuse	Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
Organisational Abuse & Institutional Abuse	The mistreatment, abuse or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in a setting or service where the adult lives or that they use. Such abuse violates the person's dignity and represents a lack of respect for their human rights.
Sexual Abuse	Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
Financial & material Abuse	Theft, fraud, internet scamming, postal and doorstep scams. coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits are all forms of financial abuse and are more often than not targeted at adults at risk.

	<p>The adult at risk can be persuaded to part with large sums of money and in some cases their life savings. Financial abuse can have serious effects including loss of income and independence and harm to health, including mental health. Where the abuse is perpetrated by someone who has the authority to manage an adult's money, the relevant body should be informed, e.g. the office of the Public Guardian for deputies and attorneys and DWP for appointees.</p>
Hate Crime	<p>The police define Hate Crime as 'any incident that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be racist, homophobic or due to a person's religion, belief, gender identity or disability'. It should be noted that this definition is not based on the perception of the victim or anyone else and is not reliant on evidence. In addition, it includes incidents that do not constitute a criminal offence.</p>
Modern slavery and trafficking	<p>Modern Slavery is the term used within the UK and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced and Compulsive Labour and Human Trafficking (The Palermo Protocol).</p> <p>These crimes includes holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after.</p> <p>Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of modern slavery within your own country.</p> <p>There are several broad categories of exploitation linked to human trafficking, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual exploitation</li> <li>• Forced labour</li> <li>• Domestic servitude</li> <li>• Organ harvesting</li> <li>• Child related crimes such as child sexual exploitation, forced begging, illegal drug cultivation, organised theft, related benefit frauds etc.</li> <li>• Forced marriage and illegal adoption</li> </ul>
Neglect & Acts of Omission	<p>Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or education services, and the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Neglect also includes a failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or the others, particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to access risk for themselves.</p>
Self-Neglect	<p>Where there is currently no standard definition of self-neglect, in addition to the Care Act (2014) definition above, research has suggested that there are three recognised forms of self-neglect which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of self-care which involves neglecting personal hygiene, nutrition and hydration or health. This type of neglect would involve a judgement to be made about what is an acceptable level of risk and what constitutes wellbeing.</li> <li>• Lack of care of one's environment- this may result in unpleasant or dirty home conditions and an increased level of risk in the domestic environment such as health and safety and fire risks associated with hoarding. This again may be subjective and require a judgement call</li> </ul>

	<p>to determine whether the conditions within an individual's home environment are acceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refusal of services that could alleviate these issues-this may include the refusal of care services, treatment, assessments or intervention, which could potentially improve self-care or care of one's environment.</li> </ul>
Sexual Exploitation	<p>Involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where adults are at risk (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. It affects men as well as women. People who are sexually exploited do not always perceive that they are being exploited. In all cases those exploiting the adult have power over them by virtue of their anger, gender, intellect, physical strength, and/or economic or other resources. There is a distinct inequality in the relationship. Signs to look out for are not being able to speak to the adult alone, observation of the adult seeking approval from the exploiter to respond and the person exploiting the adult answering for them and making decisions without consulting them.</p>

## APPENDIX 2

### FORM USED TO REPORT /RECORD ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

<b>COMPLAINT FORM</b>	
<b>1. Nature of Complaint</b>	
Date received by the Safeguarding Lead	Received in person/letter/phone/email
Person receiving:	Position:
Email:	Tel No:
Physical/ Emotional/Neglect/ Sexual/ Financial/ Inappropriate/ Historical/Other	
Date(s) of alleged offence	
Venue(s) of alleged offence	
Summary of complaint:	
<b>2. NAME of COMPLAINANT</b>	
Family name:	
Forenames:	
D.O.B.	Tel No:
Address:	
Email:	