



Safeguarding Policy

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Target Audience: St. Anne's Staff Members, Sisters, and Visitors

Review Manager: Liz Jones. Safeguarding Lead.

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Your Safeguarding Lead is Liz Jones

Your Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Rosemary Weston

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1. St. Anne's Safeguarding Adults Policy Statement

This policy will enable St. Anne's to demonstrate its commitment to keeping safe the vulnerable Sisters who live in the Home.

RNDM acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports, or suspicions of abuse as detailed in the Care Act 2014 – sections 42-46. It is important to have the policy and procedures in place so that Staff, Volunteers, Sisters, Managers, Trustees, Families and Visitors can all work to prevent abuse and know exactly what to do in the event of abuse.

RNDM is committed to safeguarding all children and adults. For RNDM this commitment directly relates to the fact that we are all made in the image of God and the Church's common belief in the preciousness, dignity, and uniqueness of every human life. We start from the principle that each person has a right to expect the highest level of protection, love, encouragement, and respect. Following on from the safeguarding reviews in 2020 we are committed to the One Church Approach to safeguarding by implementing the changes needed and ensuring we respond to victim/survivors promptly and compassionately.

This policy, with the attached procedures, also considers the Safeguarding Policies of the Local Safeguarding Boards within Kent County Council.

The Policy Statement has been drawn up to ensure that St. Anne's:

- Promotes good practice and the staff work in a way that can prevent harm, abuse and coercion occurring in the home.
- Respond appropriately to any allegations of abuse or suspicions of abuse and that the person experiencing abuse is supported and protected in an appropriate manner.
- Stop any abuse occurring.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The RNDM Board has a duty to maintain appropriate governance and oversight of safeguarding in accordance with this policy and national guidelines. Certain functions of the Board will be delegated to the Provincial and Safeguarding Lead, as indicated below.

The Provincial is responsible for ensuring appropriate policy, procedures and best practice are in place for the effective delivery of safeguarding, including

any related due diligence checks. Certain functions of the Provincial will be delegated to the Safeguarding Lead, as indicated below.

The Safeguarding Lead has direct oversight of St. Anne's safeguarding policy and guidance, including management and oversight of documentation, case progression/management and the secure, legally compliant storage of safeguarding reports and related material as well as oversight of the relationship with and input in the work of the RLSS.

The Safeguarding Lead may delegate some of this responsibility to the RLSS by referring the case to them but will remain as key contact for the case duration unless another individual is identified to assume responsibility.

The Role and Responsibility of the Designated Person

- To ensure that all St. Anne's staff including volunteers and trustees are aware of what they should do and whom they should go to if they have any concerns that a vulnerable adult may be experiencing or has experienced abuse.
- To ensure that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded, and referred where necessary to the correct Adult Social Care Authority.
- To lead the safeguarding process on behalf of St. Anne's keeping the vulnerable adult at the centre of any proceedings.
- To have responsibility for the data protection of information relating to safeguarding and to ensure that all staff understand the need for confidentiality.

The Policy and the Procedures relate to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

Vulnerable adults are defined as:

- People over 18; unless the person is subject to Domestic Violence, where the age is lowered to 16.
- A person who has a need for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting or involved in those needs)
- A person experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.
- A person, who because of their care and support needs, is unable to protect himself or herself from either the risk of abuse or the experience of abuse or neglect.

This policy applies to all staff, including all Senior Managers, Trustees, and Volunteers, Agency Staff and all Sessional Workers and anyone working on behalf of St. Anne's or RNDM.

It is acknowledged by RNDM that significant numbers of vulnerable adults are abused, and it is important that the home has a Safeguarding Adults Policy, a set of procedures to follow and has in place preventative measures to prevent abuse occurring within St. Anne's.

It is the responsibility of all RNDM and St. Anne's staff to prevent, whether by action or omission, abuse. Abuse in this policy refers to: physical; sexual; emotional; spiritual; neglect; self-neglect; organisational; material; psychological; financial; domestic or verbal. Additionally, behaviour which effectively results in modern day slavery or where there is evidence of discrimination or radicalisation, needs to be recognised and addressed as a safeguarding issue, in accordance with the procedures.

RNDM and St. Anne's will:

- Ensure that all employees across all staff levels, volunteers, sessional workers, Sisters, and families are familiar with this policy and procedures.
- All St. Anne's staff will undergo Safeguarding Training in relation to adults at risk. The list below outlines the minimum standards for training in each role:
 - Safeguarding Lead – Safeguarding Lead Training (equivalent to Level 3)
 - Deputy Safeguarding Lead/ Care Home Manager – Advance Safeguarding Training (equivalent to Level 2).
 - Care Staff (equivalent to Level 2).
- Ensure that all the Sisters who live at St. Anne's will be made aware of the Policy and Procedures. St. Anne's will use various methods to encourage understanding across all levels of need.
- Work with other agencies within the framework of the Safeguarding Adults Board issued under The Care Act 2014. This will involve working with the Local Authorities if required.
- Work within its confidentiality policy, gaining permission from the Sisters before sharing information about them with any external agency, community members or staff.

- Pass on information to local safeguarding teams in Social Services when more than one person is at risk. For example: if the concern relates to a worker or an organisation that provides services to vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that the designated named person for leading safeguarding within St. Anne's understands the statutory responsibilities to refer incidents of abuse to the relevant statutory agencies.

RNDM are committed to ensuring that Safeguarding is given strategic priority. The Safeguarding Lead has the overall responsibility for Safeguarding at St. Anne's reporting and informing RNDM Leadership Team through regular communication and updates.

The Safeguarding Lead for St. Anne's is Liz Jones.

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The Designated Deputy person for St. Anne's is the Care Home Manager, Rosemary Weston. – **01227 711912**

3. The Lampard Review

Following the Savile Inquiry, the subsequent Lampard Review (2015) identified key recommendations for safeguarding. The report was intended for NHS trusts but as St. Anne's supports vulnerable Sisters and the home would always want to be working to best practice advice, we have adopted the recommendations where applicable.

Celebrity and VIP visits

St. Anne's understands its responsibilities relating to Celebrities and VIPs who might visit the Home. These visitors will be subject to the same risk management as any person visiting. They will not be able to be alone with any client or resident at any time or able to view confidential information. This is in place to manage any potential risk that a celebrity or VIP could pose to a vulnerable adult. All staff members will follow the normal procedure for visitors in relation to safeguarding regardless of the visitor's profile or perceived importance.

4. The Six Key Principles of Safeguarding Adults

The following six principles apply to St. Anne's. These principles will inform the ways in which all staff, other Sisters and volunteers work with and for the Sisters who live in the home.

These principles will also be used to monitor and review St. Anne's procedures, policies, and processes with the intention of improving services. There is no order of importance for the principles; they are all equally relevant to Safeguarding.

- **Empowerment:**
People being supported and motivated to make their own decisions.
People being listened to and understood when they make choices about the outcomes they want from any safeguarding issue.
- **Prevention:**
Taking positive action before any abuse happens, making everyone aware of how important prevention is.
- **Proportionality:**
Making sure that the response is appropriate to the identified risk and not a disproportionate response.
- **Protection:**
Making sure that the person gets the support, they need in the way in which they need it.
- **Accountability:**
To always, be transparent in delivering and managing safeguarding.
Taking responsibility and being accountable as an organisation.
- **Partnership**
Encouraging the community to play their part in preventing, detecting, and reporting any suspicion of neglect and abuse.

5. Making Sure that Safeguarding is Personal

It is very important that St. Anne's staff recognise that every Sister is an individual with their own unique personality, views and wishes. Any process for safeguarding must be flexible, considering a person's circumstances and lifestyle. Effective safeguarding does not have to be prescriptive and should

be centred around the vulnerable person or persons involved and not around the professionals or staff involved.

Every safeguarding concern should be client led and focussed on the outcome. St. Anne's staff members need to be discussing safeguarding in a manner that encourages involvement and prevention. Keeping being safe and feeling listened to as a constant topic in the work with the Sisters allows for a transparent and involved process.

6. What is Abuse and Neglect

There are many direct and indirect forms of abuse, which constitute the terms of Abuse and Neglect in Safeguarding. The list below is not exhaustive and many forms of abuse such as exploitation and coercion are subtle and often present in the ten recognised types of abuse.

- **Physical Abuse.** This includes any assault, slapping, hitting, pushing, pulling, restraint, physical sanctions or restrictions and any misuse of medication.
- **Domestic Violence.** Including physical, psychological, sexual, emotional abuse or any "honour" based violence or abuse.
- **Psychological Abuse.** Including threats of harm, threats of abandonment, deprivation of contact or comfort, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, unreasonable withdrawal of services or support.
- **Sexual Abuse.** Including sexual assault, rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, being subject to viewing pornography, witnessing sexual acts without consent or being the subject of any sexual pressure.
- **Financial or Material Abuse.** This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, any coercion regarding inheritance or property, misappropriation of a person's possessions or benefits.
- **Modern Slavery.** This includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers will use coercion, deception, and aggression to subjugate people into a life of abuse or servitude.

- **Discriminatory Abuse.** This includes any form of harassment, name-calling, slurs or inappropriate language because of race, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.
- **Organisational Abuse.** This includes neglect or poor practice within an institution or care setting such as a care home, hospital or supported living. The scope is long ranging and could be a one-off incident or a series of incidents that relate to very poor professional practices across an organisation.
- **Neglect and acts of Omission.** This includes ignoring medical, physical, or emotional needs, failure to provide access to emergency health care or supporting a long-term health condition. It also includes withholding the basics for human life such as warmth, food, heating, and physical care.
- **Self Neglect.** This covers a very wide range of behaviour and includes a failure to care for one's own health needs, personal hygiene and includes behaviour such as hoarding of any type.

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and can be one act or repeated acts. People who behave in an abusive manner or commit acts of abuse come from all backgrounds. They may be doctors, nurses, advocates, managers, social workers, care workers or volunteers. They may also be relatives, friends, or neighbours.

7. Practice Guidance

In accordance with Article 19 of Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter, "Vos Estis Lux Mundi", 7 May 2019 [3], It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, as agreed by the Bishops Conference, April 2020, to report to the statutory authorities, all allegations of abuse made against those working in the name of the Church, regardless of whether the allegations or concerns relate to a person's behaviour in relation to their role within the Church or another setting. This policy must be applied in all situations where it is alleged, or there are reasonable grounds to believe, that a member of the Religious Community, lay persons, or associated volunteer or employee, has acted in one of the following ways:

Has behaved in a way that has harmed or is likely to have caused harm to a child or a vulnerable adult. This would include any adult at risk of harm irrespective of the cause of that vulnerability or whether the vulnerability is temporary or permanent.

Has or is suspected to have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or a vulnerable adult.

Has behaved towards a child or vulnerable adult in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults.

Has behaved in a way or made statements indicating that they may not be suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

How St. Anne's will respond to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse.

St. Anne's recognises that it has a duty to act on any concern, report or suspicion of abuse or neglect. If St. Anne's becomes aware of a safeguarding issue, they should contact the RLSS Safeguarding Team and pass the concern and all associated documentation immediately. You should ensure the person who made you aware of the concern knows you are doing this.

St. Anne's also acknowledges that each person experiencing abuse is different and that the support they are given must always be appropriate to them as unique people.

How to respond if a safeguarding concern is received:

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Record what they are saying as soon as possible.
- Remain calm and do not show disbelief.
- Let them know that you are taking this seriously.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Explain that you must share what they have told you with others.
- Be aware that medical evidence may be needed.
- Do not confront the person suspected of abuse.
- Be calm, reassuring, and responsive to the victim.
- Complete the Internal Safeguarding Form and hand it to the Safeguarding Lead or Care Home Manager.

How to respond if you witness an act of Abuse

- Look carefully at the current situation and decide whether there is any immediate danger for the person, look at the risks carefully as your first duty is to the person making the allegation.
- You should call the Police if a crime has been committed.
- Call an ambulance if medical attention is needed.

- Always preserve evidence.
- Keep other Sisters, yourself, and anyone else safe.
- Write down what happened and who was there.
- Inform your Line Manager or the designated person (or their deputy)
- Do not share any of this information with anyone who is not involved, such as family, friends or other employees or colleagues unless they need to know.
- Complete the Internal Safeguarding Form and hand it to the Safeguarding Lead or Care Home Manager.

Any suspicion or act of abuse will be discussed with the Designated Person or their Deputy. If anyone felt they could not discuss the act or suspicion with the Designated Person, then they should contact the RNDM Provincial. The victim will be told that this will happen, and they should be always kept informed. The Designated Person will inform the local Social Care Team.

If the victim does not consent to Adult Care being involved or notified then, there is a good reason to override consent if it is in the person's best interest. A Safeguarding Adults Manager will then decide if the safeguarding process should be instigated. Feedback will be given to the person who raised the concern. The police will be informed through the safeguarding process unless informed as an emergency at the time of the incident.

The Designated Person working with the Home Manager of St. Anne's will provide the information that the Social Care team will need to begin the safeguarding process. (This is detailed in Section 2)

The Person alleged to be responsible for the Abuse

Where a concern has identified a member of St. Anne's staff as the person who has abused a vulnerable adult, the person should be made aware of their rights under St. Anne's internal procedures.

St. Anne's staff have the right to be presumed innocent until the allegations against them have been proven by evidence. They also have a right to be treated fairly and their confidentiality upheld. They have a right to know what the allegations are without that prejudicing any Police investigation. St. Anne's will manage this process through its HR procedures in line with the HR advisor to St Anne's and Peninsula who are HR consultants.

What if the person alleged to have caused harm is a vulnerable person?

If the person causing harm is also a Sister living in St. Anne's, then they should be provided with appropriate support. If they are interviewed by the Police, then they must have an appropriate adult present.

A risk assessment should be completed to determine the level of support they need and the impact that any alleged incident could have.

How St. Anne's will respond to repeated or unfounded allegations

Sometimes, a Sister could make repeated unsubstantiated allegations that have no truth in them and after thorough investigations, it is decided that this is part of their behaviour. In this case, there should be robust risk assessments in place to protect everyone concerned.

It is important that all staff working at St. Anne's, delivering a service to the Sisters are protected from being falsely accused. However, all new allegations must be investigated and treated as a separate situation. All St. Anne's staff must take seriously any allegation and treat every person in the same way.

What happens next?

Once the Designated Person has raised the alert or concern with the RLSS or if necessary, the local Safeguarding team. A decision is made about whether the allegation or incident is escalated to a Section 42 – which is a Statutory Safeguarding Enquiry. This has a process, which is determined by the local Social Services Safeguarding Policy. Nationally these follow the same process but are detailed in separate local policies which are present in the projects or services in which you work. St. Anne's are likely to be involved if there is a Sister involved. The duty to investigate is on the Local Social Services team and they will liaise with the Designated Person who will act on St. Anne's behalf.

Low Level Concern

Low-level concerns are behaviours, actions, or situations that do not meet the threshold for formal safeguarding intervention but may indicate a need for early support, monitoring, or guidance. These concerns might include minor breaches of professional boundaries, patterns of behaviour that could cause discomfort, or early signs of potential risk to an adult's wellbeing.

All low-level concerns should be recorded promptly, reported to the safeguarding lead, and addressed in a proportionate and supportive manner. This approach promotes a culture of openness, ensures early intervention, and helps prevent issues from escalating into more serious safeguarding matters.

8. Whistleblowing

RNDM and St. Anne’s will encourage and enable anyone with a serious concern, to raise that issue without fear of victimisation, or disadvantage.

If that concern is regarding malpractice, illegal acts, or omissions, at St. Anne’s care home or other religious institution relating to safeguarding, then the RLSS should be made aware.

The action taken by the RLSS will depend upon the nature of the concern referred. However, an investigation will be undertaken if appropriate, followed by appropriate action and written feedback will be provided, including a rationale documenting the reasons why identified actions have been taken. This can be delegated to the RLSS.

9. Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance

RNDM and St. Anne’s will ensure that staff are subject to the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (including enhanced DBS) in line with both statutory and Catholic Church requirements.

Appointments will be based on the person's experience, skills, and ability to meet the set criteria and job specification for the specific role. It is essential to ensure that all documentation relating to the applicant is stored in a secure place and remains confidential.

Appointment to a role will not be confirmed until a satisfactory DBS Disclosure check has been received and previous employment references confirmed as being acceptable.

On appointment, all new employees should be provided with and sign to say they understand all relevant policy and procedures, including a copy of this document and their responsibilities within it highlighted.

All persons seeking to work with children or adults whether in a paid or unpaid capacity must be provided with the opportunity to self-disclose relevant conviction information. This is a DBS Code of Practice requirement and applies to anyone being asked to have an Enhanced Disclosure.

10. Internal Safeguarding Concern Form

This form should only be used internally; when it has been completed, it must be sent or given to the Designated Person responsible for St. Anne's Safeguarding Process.

Date of Concern:

Name of Sister:

Nature of Concern:

Witnesses to the Concern (including any Sister):

Check List:

Incident Form Completed Yes/No

Date form completed:

Name of person completing the form:

Post:

Signed:

11. Safeguarding Procedure Flow Chart

What to do and what will happen if you suspect or see abuse.

