

Section 1 - General Provisions

3 minutes read

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Requirements

1.1 All religious communities must comply with all the House of Bishops' safeguarding guidance and embed these into their practices where it is applicable, in accordance with the "Whole Church" approach.

1.2 Safeguarding policies apply both internally and externally:

1.2.1 Between individuals within communities (be they acknowledged or recognised).

1.2.2 When ministering to those outside the religious community, or when receiving visitors in whatever capacity, in which case they apply to both parties.

1.3 The Leader of each religious community has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with safeguarding policies and good practice and for promoting a safer culture.

1.3.1 The Leader will be trained to Senior Leadership level in Safeguarding (see section 4)

1.4 The governance documents of a religious community (or the charity which has legal responsibility for that community) must state that they accept and abide by the House of Bishops' Guidance for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in the Church of England.

1.5 Local arrangements for delivery of this policy will need to be put in place. These must be reviewed annually and must set out how the policy will be implemented locally according to the particular needs and context of the community. They do not replace the policy.

Guidance for Section 1

The Church of England wants to create a change in culture in the way safeguarding is viewed by all its many component parts. This moves away **from** the current perception that safeguarding is something which is done “additionally”, as a tick-box exercise or by a designated individual, **to** a culture where safeguarding is in the DNA of the Church and the people who comprise the Church. To become a Safer Church, safeguarding needs to be in the heart and soul of the Church’s theology and mission. With this perspective, safeguarding policies and procedures should be approached, not with a spirit of fear and (sometimes) reluctant compliance, but rather with an appreciation that they are an external expression and working out of an internal understanding of safeguarding being intrinsic to Christian beliefs and values.

Religious communities should therefore reflect what other policies and processes (formal or informal) in existence may need to be reviewed or amended in light of this, to demonstrate they have good safeguarding practice at their core. It is expected that this safeguarding policy will need to be supplemented with local procedures which will be individual to each community, and it is recommended to review these annually.^[1] These will set out how the policy principles will be applied to that particular community’s needs, for example, how it will be applied in a community of six who live together will be different from how it will apply in an international community with thousands of members. These will need to include, for example and where relevant:

- How to report concerns to Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors (DSAs), and which DSAs to report to
- How to manage events which occur abroad
- How to access training and at what level

All new national safeguarding policies will be uploaded to an e-manual. This means that the most up-to-date version will always be available, and this is particularly beneficial for acknowledged communities. It is not recommended that copies are printed; however, if they are, care will need to be taken to ensure these are replaced following any updates.

^[1] This may be required for some insurance policies.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safeguarding-religious-communities/section-1-general-provisions>