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# The Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

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Parish Safeguarding  
Manual

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# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

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# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## THE HOLY FAMILY SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

In line with the whole of the Archdiocese of Liverpool, the Parish of Holy Family (Southport) is committed to the Safeguarding Policies of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from any form of abuse or maltreatment and to promote a safe environment for them.

This commitment flows from the fact that we are all made in the image of God and the Church's common belief in the dignity and uniqueness of every human life.

We start from the principle that each person has a right to expect the highest level of care and protection, love, encouragement and respect that we can give.

We will liaise closely and openly with statutory agencies to ensure that any concerns or allegations of abuse that are raised are promptly reported and properly investigated, victims supported and perpetrators held to account.

*Copies of the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures can be inspected on request. Please contact the Local Safeguarding Representative or the Parish Priest or view them at [www.holyfamilysouthport.co.uk](http://www.holyfamilysouthport.co.uk).*

*Further details regarding safeguarding policy can be accessed via the link to the Archdiocesan Safeguarding website at <http://www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/index.php?p=44> or the Safeguarding Office on 0151 522 1043.*

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## DEFINITIONS

Under the Safeguarding principles outlined in the Liverpool Archdiocese Resource Pack, Holy Family (Southport) and all Churches and faith communities within the Archdiocese are expected to have in place arrangements which include:

- Procedures to respond to and report concerns
- Codes of practice
- Safe recruitment procedures

In the same way arrangements must be in place to respond to concerns about any form of abuse or maltreatment of a vulnerable adult.

The principles contained in 'No Secrets '(DoH 2000) and 'Safeguarding Adults : A National Framework for Good Practice (ADSS 2005)' must be followed with the acknowledgement that the Catholic Church in England and Wales must not act alone but in partnership with all other agencies to combat the abuse of vulnerable adults.

**Child** - The term "child" is used to include all children and young people up to the age of 18, i.e. someone who has not yet had their 18th birthday.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up with safe and effective care;
- Enabling children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

**Child Protection** - is a part of safeguarding and refers to the activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering Significant Harm.

### Significant Harm

'Harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another

'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development

'Health' means physical or mental health; and 'ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

**Child Abuse and Neglect** - are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Physical abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse** - is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

**Sexual abuse** - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images and photos, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

We are becoming increasingly aware of the offence of viewing or downloading abusive images of children from the Internet. This is not a "victimless" crime but is both evidence of abuse taking place and is a criminal offence. It should be referred on in all cases.

**Neglect** Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, or at any age, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate carers);
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

**The above definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006.**

**Domestic Violence** - this term is used to describe the physical, sexual or emotional (including verbal and financial) abuse between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This form of abuse affects both the victim, who by the very nature of the offence is a vulnerable adult in this context, and any children in the household. In 2005, the Adoption and Children Act 2002 extended the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill-treatment of others, especially in the home.

**Vulnerable Adult** - A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over

*'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'* ('Who decides')

Section 2 'No Secrets', Department of Health and the Home Office (2000).

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 defines a vulnerable adult as follows:

'A person is vulnerable in the context of the setting in which they are situated or the service they receive as follows:

- those in residential accommodation provided in connection with care or nursing or in receipt of domiciliary care services;
- those receiving health care;
- those in lawful custody or under the supervision of a probation officer;
- those receiving a welfare service of a prescribed description or direct payments from a social services authority;
- those receiving services, or taking part in activities, aimed at people with disabilities or special needs because of their age or state of health;
- those who need assistance in the conduct of their affairs.

A person's level of vulnerability may increase or decrease according to the circumstances they experience at any given time. Vulnerable adults could include people with:

- learning or physical disabilities;
- a sensory impairment;
- mental health needs;
- who are HIV positive;
- substance misuse needs;
- dementia.

*'Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights by another person or persons'* ('No Secrets', DoH 2000).

*'Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to or exploitation of the person subjected to it.'*

('No Secrets', DoH 2000)

A consensus has emerged identifying the following main different forms of abuse:

**Physical abuse** - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

**Sexual abuse** - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

**Psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Discriminatory abuse** - including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

Neglect and poor professional practice also need to be taken into account. This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice, at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and this is sometimes referred to as institutional abuse.

**Who may be the abuser?** Vulnerable adult(s) may be abused by a wide range of people, including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people and strangers.

Applying these definitions to different circumstances may not always be easy. Many situations may involve combinations of these elements. If there is difficulty in defining a situation this should be discussed with the Safeguarding Office. Religious Safeguarding Co-ordinators will link and consult with their Diocesan colleagues as appropriate.

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## STRUCTURE

### The Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS)

Holy Family (Southport) works within the framework provided by the Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service (CSAS). CSAS reports to and provides expert advice to the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC) on safeguarding matters. It oversees and co-ordinates safeguarding training, ensuring that the Church’s policies on safeguarding are kept up to date with good practice and are accessible to people at all levels in the Church.

It is responsible for driving and supporting improvements in safeguarding practice and is the point of liaison with other national stakeholders – both safeguarding units in other Churches and secular organisations concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, including government.

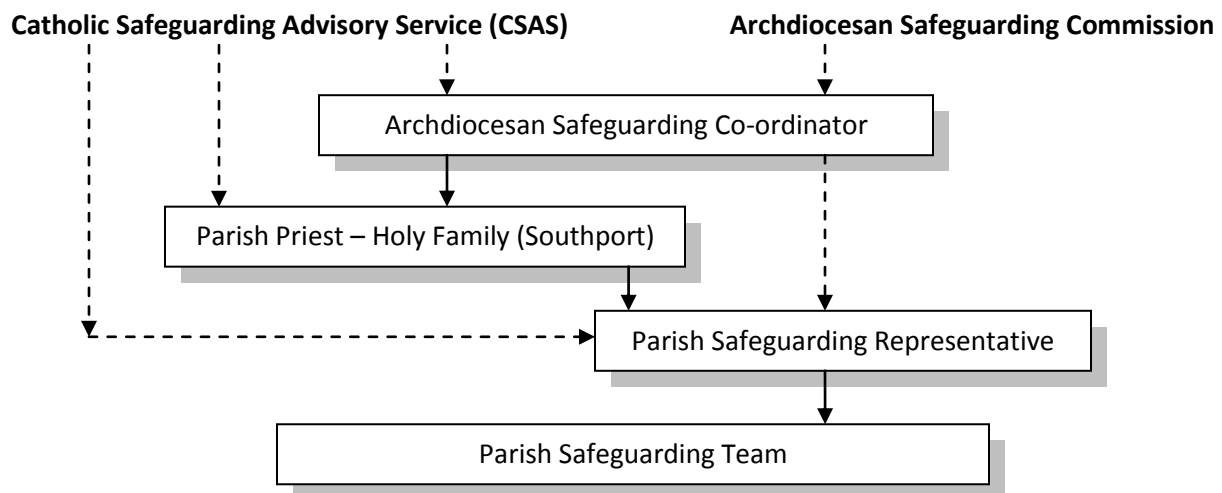
The CSAS is the registered body for CRB and Vetting & Barring and located within the Department of Christian Responsibility and Citizenship, one of the Departments of the Bishops Conference and reports and is accountable to the Bishops Conference and Conference of Religious through the NCSC.

### Liverpool Archdiocesan Safeguarding Commission

The Safeguarding Commission led by the Archbishop and Trustees, has five main responsibilities; Risk Management, Pastoral Care, Supervisors, Training and Safeguarding Co-ordination.

### Safeguarding Structure at Holy Family (Southport)

The Parish Priest has lead responsibility within the parish for all matters relating to the safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and is supported by principally the Parish Safeguarding Representative and the Parish Safeguarding Team.



# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR)

The Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) for Holy Family (Southport) is Mary Fitzpatrick who has special responsibility for promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults within the parish. The PSR is the link between the parish and the diocese and as such is in regular contact with the Co-ordinator and Administrator. The Representative attends training sessions and has a sound knowledge of the policies and procedures and also who to contact. The PSR is involved in the recruitment of people to roles within the parish and has the responsibility for facilitating the CRB Disclosure procedure at parish level and ensuring that everybody who is required to go through the procedure does so.

### Other Parish Safeguarding Workers

Volunteers to assist the Parish Safeguarding Representative are welcomed and encouraged to attend training.

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## LIST OF PARISH MINISTRIES

**Altar Server** - The altar server has specific liturgical functions to carry out as specified by the rubrics of the Roman Catholic Church

**Bereavement Group** - The group offers help, both spiritual and temporal, to those who have been bereaved. This may be immediately following the death of a loved one or in the weeks and months afterwards

**Catechist** - Prepares both adults and children for the reception of the sacraments and offers education for those people who have not had access to Roman Catholic teaching

**Children's Liturgy Leaders** - Provide an adapted Liturgy of the Word for children during Mass on Sundays

- The Children's Liturgy team all have a copy of this document and are fully in agreement with the importance of the safeguarding issues highlighted. They have discussed how they will comply in the context of their ministry, which is to provide an adapted Liturgy of the Word for children during Mass on Sundays.
- The team will ensure that all leaders have been CRB checked. At each session in the church hall they will keep a register of numbers of children /leaders and adults with a record of any incident should it occur.
- They will comply with the requirement for the minimum numbers of adults and leaders at any one session. In terms of risk assessment of activity in the hall, they have pointed out the necessity for a telephone (a mobile should suffice), as well as the need to repair the uneven steps outside the presbytery and for improvements in the female toilets as well as the provision of disabled toilets.
- These issues have been reported to the Parish priest and it is expected that action will be taken in the near future given budget restraints (19/3/2012).

**Choir Leader(s)** - Working with parish clergy the choir leader(s) selects the appropriate music and has a responsibility for selecting and training choir members of all ages

**Fundraising Organizer/Volunteer** - This broad brush title covers those people who have the responsibility for organizing and running fund raising events. Volunteers work under the guidance of the fundraising organizer

**Extraordinary Minister of Communion** - The Extraordinary Ministers of Communion are commissioned to take Holy Communion to the sick and the housebound and, when requested by the Parish Priest, he/she may be called upon to carry out other liturgical functions. Additionally, the Extraordinary Ministers of Communion will also make visits to members of the parish who often live alone with little or no contact with the outside world

CAFOD Helper\*

Chair-Bound Health Instructor\*

Knights of St Columba

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Scout Leader\*

Scout Assistants\*

\*These organizations have their own recruitment processes and volunteers in these areas must obtain an appropriate CRB Disclosure from the relevant body or association

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## SAFE RECRUITMENT

Over the years we have been blessed by the huge number of dedicated and talented volunteers and employed people – parents and single people, priests and religious – who have given a tremendous amount to the children, young people and the vulnerable in our parishes. Our churches and parish organisations are helping people every day.

Very few parishes have professionally qualified paid workers. We rely more and more on willing and conscientious volunteers to nurture and lead our young and care for our vulnerable people. We know from hard experience that it's not always easy to find volunteers. When we have people who will readily volunteer and can find the time to do so, we tend to assume they are trustworthy – and the vast majority are. Regrettably, we know that child sex offenders and individuals who wish to have access to children, young people or vulnerable adults for their own purposes will seek to operate in organisations, including church communities, where they believe their behaviour will not be identified.

Sadly, it is simplistic to assume that everyone shares the same high values or has appropriate respect for individuals. We have to recognise, that safeguards we naturally assume and take for granted, need to be deliberately put in place and checked – otherwise we may not be protecting the most easily influenced in our communities as effectively as we think we are. Sadly, even in the best run organisations, it has been known for children, young people or vulnerable adults to be physically, emotionally, sexually or financially abused.

Therefore, conscious of the need for safe recruitment, supervision and support of workers and for developing best practice for direct work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, the following principles are in place.

Any person seeking an appointment to a post that involves contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, must comply fully with the appointment procedures, these are:-

### **Treat all potential staff/ volunteers as job applicants.**

Anyone who is asked or wishes to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, whether full or part time, must as a first step complete a "Standard Application Form", a copy of which is in the parish pack. The application must include:

- A statement of personal details, full name, date of birth and address together with the applicant's signature.

- An original of a formal document that confirms the personal details. For example a passport or driving licence.
- A resumé of previous experience of relevant work, if any.
- Permission to contact in writing or in person, two named referees.
- Details of any convictions, including those “spent” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, in the form of a Self Declaration. (SDF) The contents of the SDF will only be seen by the Safeguarding Office or a person who has a legitimate entitlement.
- A signed agreement to undertake a disclosure enquiry with the Criminal Records Bureau, in the event that the person is to be offered the appointment.

**Obtain references from people who have knowledge of the person’s experience.**

In normal practice two written references should be taken up from two adults who know the applicant well. At least one of these references should be from an adult who has experienced the applicant working with children/ young people/ vulnerable adults. The Parish Priest, the Parish Safeguarding Representative or any other person involved in the interviewing and appointing the applicant may not be a referee, nor should they be a member of the group the person is applying to join.

- When requesting references it is important to state explicitly that the job/ role is with children, young people or vulnerable adults and the referee must be asked to comment specifically on the applicant’s suitability for such work.
- If anything in the references gives rise to doubts about the applicant’s suitability for work with children/ young people/ vulnerable adults, albeit in vague or ambiguous terms, the referee should be contacted to discuss the matter further.

**Explore the applicant’s experience of working with or contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults in an interview.**

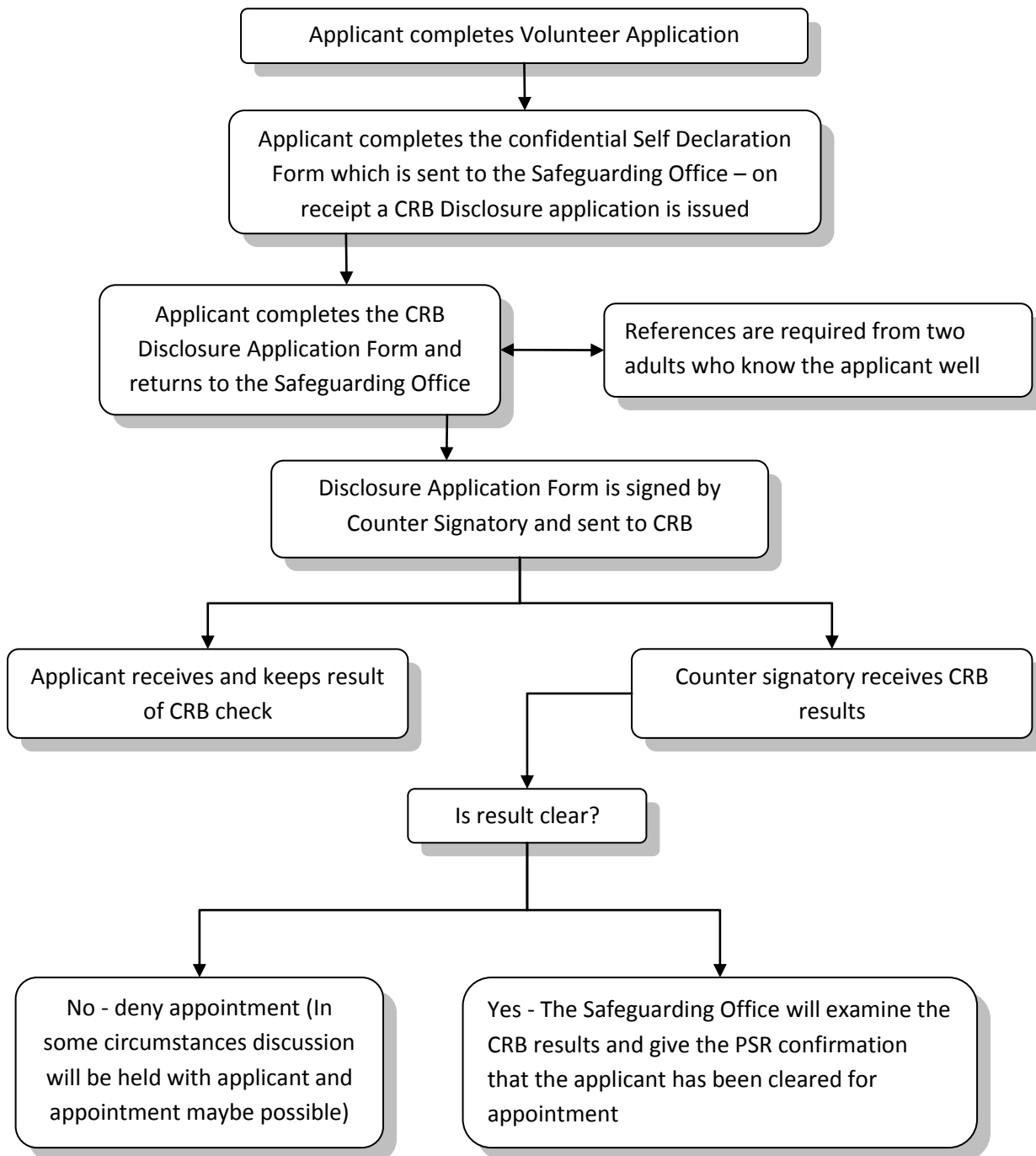
All applicants for paid and voluntary work with children/ young people/ vulnerable adults must be interviewed before being appointed. The interview might normally be conducted by the Parish Priest, Group Leader and the Parish Safeguarding Representative. As to the degree of formality of the interview, the interviewers should bear in mind the nature of the post/ role, the level of responsibility it carries, whether the post is paid or not and the maturity and experience of the applicant. The interviewers should explore and discuss the applicant’s previous work experience, if any, with children/ young people/ vulnerable adults, the applicant’s understanding of their role in safeguarding practice and their commitment to it. Any responses that give cause for concern must be explored further until there is no doubt as to the applicant’s suitability.

### **Ascertain whether the applicant has any previous convictions for relevant offences.**

Applicants should be told clearly and informed by application form that the position whether paid or voluntary is an exception to the normal workings of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Normally offences are “spent”, after a period of time; therefore the ex-offender can state lawfully that they have no criminal record. There are many exceptions to this, including those who seek to work and have contact with people who are under 18 years old. In this situation ALL previous convictions must be disclosed voluntarily whether the post is a paid one or a voluntary one via a confidential declaration (CDF). Therefore to work with children, all convictions, bind over orders and cautions must be informed by a Criminal Records Bureau check.

- When the Parish Priest and the Parish Safeguarding Representative wish to appoint a person to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, there must be a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. The following procedure must be followed in all cases:
  
- See flowchart below
  - Volunteer completes Application
  - Self (Confidential) declaration Form
  - Confirmation of Identity Form
  - The applicant for the job/ role must fill in the Disclosure Application Form. The Parish Priest or Parish Safeguarding Representative should assist the applicant if that is necessary.
  - Relevant and acceptable forms of identity must be produced.
  - After the Safeguarding Counter Signatory has signed the Disclosure Application Form it will be sent to the CRB.
  - The results of the CRB check will be sent direct to both the applicant and the Safeguarding Office.
  - The applicant keeps their copy of the CRB results.
  - The Safeguarding Office will examine the CRB results and will give the Parish Safeguarding Representative confirmation that the applicant has been cleared for appointment. Similarly if there are any concerns these will be expressed to the Parish Safeguarding Representative and clearance will be denied.
  - The Safeguarding Office’s copy of the CRB result will be recorded onto the CSAS National Database and then destroyed in accordance with CRB guidelines.

### Flowchart - Safe Recruitment of Volunteers



## **Post Appointment**

Vigilance does not end with the appointment. Therefore all appointments should be subject to continued monitoring.

### **Ensure all staff/ volunteers receive training in the risk of abuse.**

All those working with children and vulnerable adults must receive appropriate training in awareness and best practice. The diocese undertakes to facilitate appropriate training. The level of training required will vary depending upon the level of responsibility of the role undertaken.

### **Ensure all staff/ volunteers are aware of the guidelines regarding allegations of abuse.**

A summary of the procedures on how to respond to a specific allegation or suspicion of abuse are found in this document. It is essential that all who work with children and vulnerable adults have a sound knowledge of these procedures. This must form part of the ongoing awareness training and supervision of those who are appointed to work with children and vulnerable adults.

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## TRAINING

### Parish Safeguarding Representatives (PSR's)

In line with the Archdiocesan guidance, we at Holy Family Southport have fully adopted the safeguarding policies and procedures. These stress the importance of training and development in supporting safe practice in the Church with respect to preventing and responding to safeguarding concerns. The role description for the Parish Safeguarding Representative highlights the need for training and continuing development and the training areas outlined are representative of the consultation that took place in 2009 with Archdiocesan Parish Safeguarding Representatives.

It is our policy to ensure that training needs are matched by training opportunities so far as resources allow. All safeguarding role holders will have access to training and development opportunities commensurate with their role and responsibilities and existing level of knowledge and experience.

Training courses in the main will be provided through the Archdiocese although for specific requirements the use of external training will be used as appropriate. The training needs identified are not met simply by attendance at multiple training events because there is a likelihood that several areas are more likely to be addressed in a single event.

### Support for Parish Representatives

It is important to have support processes in place in order to help Parish Safeguarding Representatives to carry out the responsibilities of their role. By "support" we mean the provision of information, advice and guidance, and guaranteed access to a named person responsible for this. It also means providing a listening ear when necessary.

It is important that people carrying out safeguarding roles in the Church have access to regular support to help them to perform their role well and to reduce any risk of stress. It is also necessary to be proactive in making support available; this means that reps should know when they can expect to see or hear from people who are responsible for supporting them and that they feel able to ask for help when they need it without feeling that they shouldn't be bothering anyone.

Support for Parish Safeguarding Representatives will be provided by Safeguarding Coordinators, Safeguarding Officer/Administrators, Parish Priests, other Parish Safeguarding Representatives and possibly Commission members.

Support is frequently provided in groups, at Pastoral meetings or training events, or by telephone or e mail contact, or through newsletters. What is important is that safeguarding representatives can rely on support and know what to expect. Clear local support arrangements will be established that are appropriate for the individuals concerned, sensitive to local conditions and approved by the relevant Commission.

If a local safeguarding representative is struggling to perform the responsibilities of their role, they will be able to discuss any problems with the Safeguarding Office. They must be addressed to enable them to carry out their responsibilities to a good standard. If concerns persist and performance cannot be improved, it will be necessary to remove an individual from their role so that the safety of children and vulnerable adults is not compromised.

### Standards of support

1. PSR's will participate in an induction programme which commences as close as possible to the date of their appointment; this will be supported by access to information in the parish pack.
2. PSR's will have a contact telephone number and e mail address for their Safeguarding Office
3. PSR's will attend a minimum of one Pastoral meeting a year for training and support purposes
4. PSR's will be invited to attend a yearly meeting for informal networking with other PSR's
5. PSR's will be informed of important changes in practice, policy and procedure that affect their role through Pastoral meetings, newsletters, and diocesan websites.

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Certain standards are defined in the Archdiocesan Resource Pack outlining behaviours and the safe recruitment of representatives and volunteers which underpin the procedures adopted by Holy Family. These are largely reproduced below:

### Dignity

Most of us take for granted our right to safety and security and sacredness of our own personal space. When someone ignores that and uses it for their own ends, we feel that infringement and usually feel it deeply. When someone takes advantage of another in an abusive way, their personal privacy has been seriously invaded. If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is the victim, it is so much worse.

There are some basic principles of acceptable behaviour which will help us to achieve a safe environment and minimise situations where children, young people or vulnerable adults could be at risk.

### **Properly appointed adults must supervise children.**

When caring for vulnerable adults, the government document 'No Secrets' provides guidance in relation to the main categories of abuse that are suffered, which will help in making decisions and determining our behaviour. The types of abuse are:

- Physical (ill treatment, failure to provide care)
- Psychological (humiliation, intimidation, indifference)
- Sexual
- Financial or material abuse (exploitation/ theft)
- Neglect (deliberate withholding of care/ support)
- Discriminatory (race, gender, age religion)

Abuse can either be deliberate, or the result of ignorance, lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Acceptable behaviour is based upon respect of:

- Dignity (individual's)
- Integrity (right to choose)
- Privacy (awareness of boundaries)

### As a properly appointed adult the individual MUST:

- Operate within the Church's principles and guidance and any particular procedures of the Diocese, Religious Congregation, Parish or Club.
- Treat everyone equally and with respect – show no favouritism. Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour e.g. tantrums and crushes.
- Engage and interact appropriately with children, young people and vulnerable adults and allow them to talk about any concerns they may have. Physical contact must be both age appropriate and touch related to the person's needs, not the worker's.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow – an environment which allows bullying, inappropriate shouting or any form of discrimination is unacceptable.
- Respect the sacred dignity of every individual and their right to personal privacy.
- Recognise that particular care is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues or involved in caring for children, young people or vulnerable adults i.e. maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Avoid situations that compromise your relationship with children, young people or the vulnerable and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust. This rule should apply to all such behaviours, including those which would not constitute an illegal act. (Keep everything in public.)
- Ensure that a **minimum** of two leaders is always present, maintaining the gender balance of the group. In larger groups/ clubs the following supervision ratios should be adhered to:
  - 1 adult to every 3 children under 5
  - 1 adult to every 6 children aged 5-8
  - 1 adult to every 10-15 children aged 8 – 11
  - 1 adult to every 15-20 children aged over 11

### As a properly appointed adult the individual MUST NOT :

- Engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults – physical, verbal or sexual. (Avoid any physical activity which is, or can be construed as, sexual, aggressive or threatening.)
- Discuss topics or use vocabulary with children and young people which could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents or another adult, whether writing, phoning, email or internet.
- Arrange an overnight trip with a child or young person without ensuring that another approved person will be present and that appropriate consent is in place.
- Take a chance when common sense suggests another more prudent approach.
- Physically, emotionally or sexually abuse or exploit (including financially) anyone.

## RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

Where information about an allegation or a concern becomes known to a person within the Church, then action must be taken to inform the Police or Social Services as appropriate so that children, young people and vulnerable adults are not put at continued risk and a proper investigation may take place.

### 1. KEY PRINCIPLES

- If any person reasonably suspects that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being, has been or is likely to be abused, they must take action. To do nothing is not an option.
- The actions of those who first handle allegations and concerns are most important. They could dictate the effectiveness of a subsequent enquiry.
- Under no circumstances should the alleged abuser be alerted at this stage, either directly or indirectly. Important evidence may be lost.
- The aim of the process which follows is to reach a point where the fullest possible information has been gathered. Formal investigations will be carried out by the Police or Social Services.
- It is only with the benefit of complete information that vulnerable people may be protected through careful assessment of risk, based on fact and professional judgement.
- The guiding principles for any person in receipt of information about a concern or an allegation should be:
  - LISTEN
  - RECORD
  - REFER
- Sometimes information will be in the form of observations made by the person recording the allegation or concern.

#### a. LISTEN

- Where information is given in person, listen and accept what is said seriously. Do not pre-judge, rationalise, dismiss or minimise. Do not make judgemental statements about any person involved.
- Be aware that a person's ability to recount his or her concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, nationality and upon any disability which may affect use of language and range of vocabulary. Do not suggest words, but use theirs.
- Adopt a listening style which is compassionate, calm and reassuring. If the information given to you shocks, disgusts or distresses you, do not allow these feelings to show. If you do, you may inadvertently dissuade the person from giving any further information.

- Do not promise total confidentiality. If this is proposed as a condition of giving information
- about possible abuse, such confidence must be refused.
- Do not make promises about future events.
- Explain what will happen next. Indicate who will be made aware of the information which has been given by them. Leave contact details of yourself and any other appropriate person in case the referrer needs to ask questions later.
- An adult who provides information should be encouraged to share their information, where appropriate with the Statutory Authorities. Support should be offered in doing so. If they refuse, explain that you will have to take advice from the Safeguarding Coordinator.

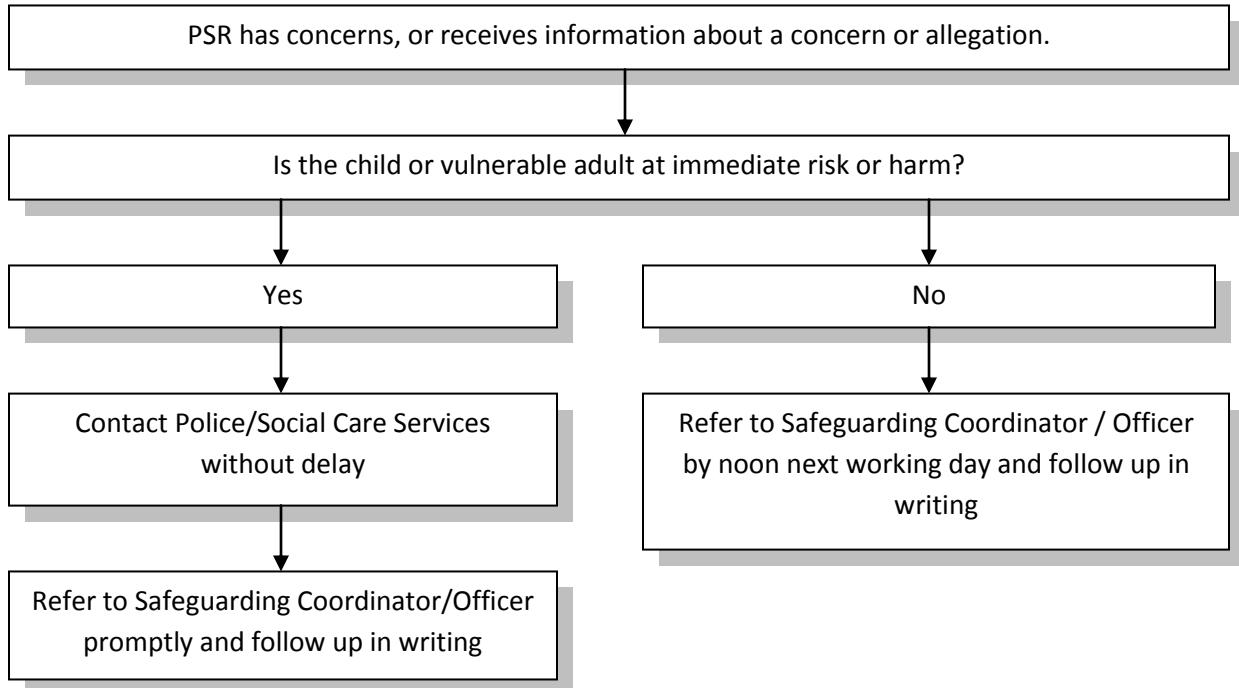
#### b. RECORD

- Whenever possible and practical, take notes during the conversation. Always ask permission to do this and explain the importance of recording all information. If it is not appropriate, make a written record as soon as possible afterwards, if possible by the end of the day.
- Use the Safeguarding Incident/Concern Report Form – it will help you obtain the relevant information. The record should be signed and dated by the author. Wherever possible the speaker's own words should be used. It is important to include full details of referrals to Police or Social Services.
- All original records, including rough notes, should be passed to the Safeguarding Coordinator by noon the next working day.

#### c. REFER

- See flowchart below
- The overriding principle of referral is as follows: 'If somebody believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then s/he should always refer his or her concerns to the local authority social services department. In addition to the social services department, the Police have powers to intervene in these circumstances.'

## Responding to Allegations



## 2. CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

- Where a concern exists that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be being abused, may have been abused or be at risk of abuse, such a concern must initially be treated in the same way as an allegation.
- Refer the concern/allegation to the Safeguarding Coordinator/Safeguarding Officer promptly so that further action may be considered. If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk, a referral must be made to the Statutory Authorities and then the Safeguarding Coordinator/Officer must be informed.
- Do not alert the alleged abuser, either directly or indirectly.
- Where a referral is made to the Statutory Authorities by a person other than the Safeguarding Coordinator or Safeguarding Officer, all information must be passed to the Safeguarding Coordinator/Safeguarding Officer by noon the next working day and followed up in writing.

### 3. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

- All information connected with a child, young person or vulnerable adult enquiry is confidential within the multi-agency network. No information should be shared with any person who does not need to know for the purposes of protecting children, young people or vulnerable adults and facilitating the conducting of an effective investigation.
- Consider: Does the person **NEED** to know the information?
- Does the person need to know **ALL** the information?
- Does the person need to know the information **NOW**?
- Record what information has been provided and to whom, with reasons.

#### THE ROLE OF A LOCAL SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE WHERE A CONCERN OR ALLEGATION HAS BEEN MADE

- The Local Safeguarding Representative will follow the procedures above whenever they receive information about a concern or allegation.
- Some Local Safeguarding Representatives may be child protection professionals and may be tempted to initiate investigative action because of their knowledge and expertise. Such blurring of boundaries between roles should be carefully avoided. The Local Safeguarding Representative does not have an investigative role, and should follow the above procedure.
- The Local Safeguarding Representative may be requested to assist the Safeguarding Coordinator/Safeguarding Officer with any practical matters.
- The Local Safeguarding Representative must not take on the role of support person to a victim or survivor of abuse, to his or her family or to an alleged abuser. The role of support person is independent of the Safeguarding structure.

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## RISK ASSESSMENT

### General Guidance

Risk assessments should be completed well before the event/activity and should be approved by the event leader or, if completed by the event leader, by a suitably qualified individual. If in doubt, seek advice from your Diocesan Safeguarding Office.

A risk assessment for an event/activity need not be complex but it should be comprehensive.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met during an event/activity should have the aim of identifying the potential hazards and then reducing them. Children and young people must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be managed safely then the event/activity must not take place.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations.

- a. What are the hazards?
- b. Who might be affected by them?
- c. What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- d. Can the event leader put the safety measures in place?
- e. What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The following factors should be taken into consideration when assessing the risks.

- a. The type of event/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- b. The location, routes and modes of transport.
- c. The competence, experience and qualifications of adult helpers.
- d. The ratio and gender of adults to children.
- e. The group members' ages, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity. **(Check consent form for this information).**
- f. The specific or medical needs of children/young people. **(Check consent form for this information)**
- g. Seasonal conditions, weather and timing of event or activity.
- h. How to cope when a child/young person becomes unable or unwilling to continue.
- i. The need to monitor the risks throughout the event/activity.

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record and give copies to all leaders prior to the event/activity, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks. Parish priests or leaders of the organisation should also be given a copy so that approval, as necessary, can be given with a clear understanding that effective planning has taken place.

Frequent visits to local venues such as a leisure centre may not need a risk assessment every time. Nevertheless, it is essential not to become complacent. A generic assessment of the risks of such visits should be made at regular intervals and careful monitoring should take place.

The event leader and other leaders should monitor the risks throughout the event and take appropriate action as necessary.

Before booking a day/residential trip the event leader should obtain a written or documentary assurance that providers such as retreat centres or tour operators have assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place, including:

- Safe recruitment procedures.
- Adequate public liability insurance.
- A license to operate (where required).
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for its staff.
- Safeguarding policy.

### **Risk Assessment: Swimming - Leisure Centre and swimming pools with an attendant lifeguard**

The pool's lifeguard will be on duty to supervise all swimmers. This does not reduce the duty of care the event leader and leaders have for the children and young people. All the leaders must constantly be able to account for the children and young people and should monitor the behaviour of the children and young people.

Where possible leaders should consider using Leisure Watch facilities\* or other approved activities.

### **PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS**

A private swimming pool may only be used under the supervision of a qualified lifeguard, and in the presence of at least one other adult, both of whom should stay out of the water unless there is an emergency. Supervision ratios must accommodate the needs of the children and young people and be increased as necessary.

## **OPEN WATER SWIMMING**

Swimming or paddling in the sea or other natural waters should be allowed as formal and supervised activities, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. Nonetheless, children and young people should always be in sight of their leaders. One leader should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

The event leader, or another leader in the group, should hold a relevant life saving award, especially where lifeguard cover may not be available. For further advice contact:

**The Royal Life Saving Society, River House,  
High Street, Broom, Warwickshire, B50 4HN  
Telephone No. 01789 773 994  
[www.lifesavers.org.uk](http://www.lifesavers.org.uk)**

When swimming takes place in a river, lake or the sea, the event leader will need to:

- Consider the suitability of the water including the temperature.
- Define the limits of the swimming area.
- Brief the children and young people on any matters specific to the location e.g. limits to the area in use, other water users and hazards before they enter the water.
- Adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall.
- Contact the local coastguard, harbour master, lifeguard or tourist information to obtain details of the nature and location of hazards.
- Establish a base to which members of the group may return if separated.
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage overflows etc.
- Ascertain for themselves the level of the pupils' swimming ability and ensure adequate supervision
- rotas for the particular group.

\*Leisure Watch is an initiative that is founded upon the premise that people in the community can play a part in reducing the risks posed to children by adults in the community who may harm them. Where the Leisure Watch sign is displayed, staff will have been trained to be observant and aware of the safety of children and young people and know what to do if they see behaviour which causes any concern.

## Risk Assessment: Specialised Activities - Adventure Activities using Licensed Providers

Certain activities when undertaken by children or young people under 18 years unaccompanied by a parent need a license when commercial companies sell them, or when local authorities provide them without a charge. Caving, climbing, trekking and water sports (except rowing) are such activities.

The Adventure Activities Licensing Service can advise about licensable activities. Their address is;

**Adventure Activities Licensing Service, 44, Lambourne Crescent,  
Cardiff Business Park, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5GG.**

**Tel: 02920 755 715 Fax: 02920 755 757**

**website: <http://www.aala.org>**

The event leader must check:

Whether the provider is legally required to hold a license for the activities it offers and if so, that the provider actually holds a license.

### **ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES USING NON-LICENSABLE PROVIDERS**

Not all providers are required to hold a license. Commercial bodies and local authorities are exempt if their activities fall outside the scope of the regulations. Not holding a license does not imply a lack of safety. It might simply mean the provider or the activity is not licensable.

If proposing to use a non-licensable provider, the event leader should obtain assurances in writing from the provider that:

- Risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead children and young people of the groups age range on the activity. Competence could be demonstrated by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where it exists or through successful participation in an NGB approved in-house scheme.
- The equipment is appropriate and that its safe condition is checked before each use.
- Operating procedures conform to the guidelines of the National Governing Body for the activity where this is appropriate.
- Clear management of safety systems in place.
- There is appropriate provision for first aid.
- There are emergency procedures (including arrangements for informing next of kin and alerting the group leader); that the provider's staff are competent in the procedures and will hold emergency phone numbers and addresses of group members; that the group will have a fire drill as soon as possible on arrival at the provider's base.

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## PARISH CHECKLIST

### AIM OF THE POLICY

To minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable people may occur by proper planning of activities and events.

Many of these will be followed in our parishes anyway but this checklist should help to define the tasks which will lead to sound safeguarding in our communities. In these ways we can firm up our practice and ensure that it becomes uniform across the Diocese.

- ✓ All new and existing volunteers in roles which have been defined nationally as requiring a CRB check must complete the three stage process – Personal Details, Safe Safeguarding Self Declaration and CRB Disclosure Application Form.
- ✓ Have a trial period of 3 months for all new volunteers, at the end of which both parties review the situation. Inexperienced parish workers and/ or inexperienced volunteers will benefit from clear guidance and support.
- ✓ All volunteers should have seen and have ready access to the diocesan guidelines and know what to do in the case of suspected or alleged abuse: Listen – Record – Refer. Always take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately.
- ✓ Make everyone aware that of the Church’s safeguarding policies and procedures – young people, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors. Each Church and hall should display information on the notice board giving contact information to anyone who has a concern.
- ✓ Ensure that any premises used for parish groups and events are safe and well maintained.
- ✓ Know where the emergency exits, fire extinguishers and alarms are and be fully aware of the evacuation plan in the event of any emergency.
- ✓ Encourage all parish workers and volunteers to be involved in regular training (including First Aid).
- ✓ Ensure that there is a first aid kit and that it is checked frequently.
- ✓ Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover, especially for activities away from the normal meeting place. This applies also to any mini buses and/ or private cars which are used – insurance and any necessary permits must be obtained.

- ✓ Keep an up to date register of group contact information; names of children, address, telephone number, special medications, doctor's name and address, telephone number and permission to be 'in loco parentis'. Ensure that there is always access to a phone/ mobile in case of emergency.
- ✓ Ensure that a **minimum** of two leaders is always present, maintaining the gender balance of the group. In larger groups/ clubs the following supervision ratios should be adhered to:
 

1 adult to every 3 children under 5	1 adult to every 10-15 children aged 8 – 11
1 adult to every 6 children aged 5 – 8	1 adult to every 15-20 children aged over 11
- ✓ During any activities away from the normal meeting place, a risk assessment should be undertaken and the supervision ratios should be increased accordingly.
- ✓ For any activities away from the normal meeting place ensure that parents/ guardians have signed a consent form. Ensure that someone knows where the group is working away from the normal meeting place.
- ✓ Always think and act carefully to avoid situations which could lead to difficulties or embarrassment, accusations or temptations. An example of 'danger' is one leader/ worker and one young person being together 'in private' – whether that be in counselling, or on a residential weekend, or driving someone home in a car. Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned. Do not just rely on your good name to protect you.
- ✓ Do not permit any photographs or videos to be taken or displayed of parish events without parental consent. Never show a photograph of a child or young person with personal details (including their name) accompanying it.
- ✓ Treat everyone with dignity and respect at all times, set an example you would wish others to follow and always behave appropriately, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**Further information relating to the various categories of event and the appropriate detailed actions can be found in the Archdiocesan Resource Pack (pages 37 – 53)**

# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## Appendix 1 - References



# Safeguarding at the Parish of Holy Family (Southport)

## Appendix 3 - Training Requirements