



Diocese of Middlesbrough

Lourdes Pilgrimage

Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

Name of originator/author:	Keith Tillotson
Date issued:	November 2018
Date Reviewed:	May 2026
Date next review due:	May 2027

We all have a right to a life that is free from harm and abuse. The Diocese of Middlesbrough recognises that safeguarding those at risk from abuse and neglect is the responsibility of everybody. We aim to ensure that those at risk from abuse or neglect are enabled to be cared for in an environment free from abuse, harassment, violence or aggression.

As such, the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Lourdes Pilgrimage will ensure the Diocese of Middlesbrough's policies and procedures are reflected within the Pilgrimage's policy and procedures and ***will be responsible for all hospitalité volunteers, supported pilgrims and, where applicable, their families. Members of the pilgrimage who travel as pilgrims will be the responsibility of the Diocesan Safeguarding Lead.***

Our aim is to work with individuals and those involved in their care, to ensure that they receive the support and protection they require; that they are listened to and treated with respect, compassion and dignity.

The pilgrimage committee understand the importance of working together to ensure that:

- The human rights and needs of those at risk are always respected and upheld.
- A proportionate, timely, professional and ethical response is made to any individual who may be experiencing abuse.

We aim to ensure that any individual at risk maintains:

- Choice and control
- Safety
- Health
- Quality of Life
- Dignity and respect

Our processes ensure that those working for, and on behalf of, the Diocese can recognize and respond to the main forms of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Institutional abuse
- Discrimination
- Neglect and self-neglect

This is not an exhaustive list but gives an illustration of the sort of behaviour that could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Promote a culture in which safeguarding can be openly discussed and provide support for those raising concerns.
- Establish the facts about the circumstances giving rise for concern.
- Identify sources and the level of risk.

- Ensure that any information given is recorded and that the Diocese is contacted to inform them of the concern or harm. If an individual is at immediate risk of serious harm, the DSL will contact the French police. The Diocese will also be informed.
- The wishes of the person harmed will be considered whenever possible. This may result in no further action.
- Safely store any documentation relating to incidents of harm, using body maps to record any injuries where appropriate.
- Follow the Diocese's policy guidelines where applicable.
- Report any incidents of abuse to the relevant parties.
- Advise and support staff on the pilgrimage.
- Ensure staff are trained to enhance knowledge.
- Actively promote the Diocese's Whistleblowing Policy.

Volunteer Staff Responsibilities

- Be able to recognise and report incidences of harm.
- Report concerns of harm or poor practices that may lead to harm.
- Remain up-to-date with training.
- Follow policy and procedures.
- Know how and when to use the whistleblowing procedures.

General Principles

- We are compliant with national safer recruitment and employment practices, thus ensuring that our volunteer staff are fit to work with supported pilgrims, including the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- All are aware if they feel they cannot follow the regular reporting procedure, they must use the whistleblowing process.
- Any investigation of allegations will dovetail with Diocesan procedures.
- The DSL will use incident reporting, lessons learned and auditing measures to improve the quality of provision.
- The DSL recognises their responsibility in relation to confidentiality and will share information appropriately.
- The DSL will work with the Diocese to ensure that concerns or allegations of abuse are appropriately referred.
- The DSL will ensure that any action that is taken is assessed, proportionate and reflective of the risk presented.

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicion or Witnessing Abuse

Where an individual discloses or discusses potential abuse or harm the disclosee will:

- Respond by staying calm and listening.
- Reassure them that what they say will be taken seriously and explain that they have a duty to report what has been disclosed.
- Record the conversation by writing up notes clearly as soon as possible.
- Report in a timely manner to the DSL

Responding to Abuse or Neglect

The DSL must:

- Address any immediate safety and protection needs.
- Assess any risks and take steps to ensure that those involved are in no immediate danger.
- Arrange for a trusted companion to stay with the person abused or neglected.
- Assess whether others are at risk of abuse or neglect and take appropriate steps to protect them.
- Arrange for assistance from the medical team if necessary.
- Contact an appropriate emergency service if necessary.

Documenting a Disclosure

- Make a note of what the person actually said using his or her own words and phrases.
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.
- Note anyone else who was there at the time.
- Where there are cuts, bruises or other marks on the skin, use a body map to indicate their location.
- Make sure the information written is factual.
- Sign and date the report, noting the time and location of the disclosure.

Abuse by another vulnerable individual

We recognise that we may also have a responsibility towards the person causing harm. In this situation, it is important that the needs of the individual who is the alleged victim are addressed separately from the needs of the person causing harm.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Referral

There is a statutory requirement for the Diocese to refer an individual to the DBS Vetting and Barring Scheme if they consider that the individual is guilty of deliberate misconduct, such that another person was harmed or put at risk of harm.

Consent

When reporting information that concerns the safety of an individual at risk of harm, consent from that person is not required. However, informing the individual of your concerns and a referral is good practice, unless it would put you or your colleagues at risk – or would put the individual at further risk.

Confidentiality

Information will be shared in a manner that is compliant with the statutory responsibilities. Individuals at risk will be fully informed about the information that is recorded and, as a general rule, be asked for their permission before information is shared with others.

Whistleblowing

Volunteer staff are encouraged to share any serious concerns about a colleague's behavior. This may not be related to an individual at risk. However, they may not be following a code of conduct, could be pushing boundaries beyond normal limits or displaying conduct which is a breach of the law. Generally, any conduct which compromises health and safety or conduct which falls below established standards of practice with individuals at risk. Whistleblowing is an important aspect of the support and protection of individuals at risk of harm. All members of the pilgrimage are aware of, and reminded of, the Diocese's Whistleblowing Policy, which is available for this purpose.

Risk Assessment and Management

The assessment of the risk of abuse of individuals is integral in all pilgrimage assessment and planning processes. The assessment of this risk is dynamic and ongoing; regularly reviewed so that adjustments can be made in response to changes in the levels and nature of risk.

Review

This policy and its procedures will be annually reviewed:

- in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on safeguarding, or following any changes within the Diocesan Pilgrimage's arrangements.
- or following any issues or concerns raised about safeguarding on the pilgrimage.