



Diocese of Middlesbrough Lourdes Pilgrimage

Whistleblowing Policy & Procedures

Name of originator/author:	Keith Tillotson
Date issued:	November 2018
Date Reviewed:	May 2026
Date next review due:	May 2028

Contents

Policy Aims

Safeguards

Confidentiality

Anonymous Allegations

Untrue or Malicious Allegations

Procedure

- How to Raise a Concern
- Safeguarding Co-coordinators
- How the Pilgrimage will respond

Further Contact Details

Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Encourage you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice.
- Provide avenues for you to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken.
- Reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith.

If you are a volunteer, there are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a grievance. The scope of this policy covers concerns about the Pilgrimage safeguarding role only, and is relevant to the role of volunteer.

Thus, any concerns that you have about any aspect of the Pilgrimage safeguarding responsibilities for children and vulnerable adults, or the conduct of those who hold an office within the Pilgrimage, or others acting on their behalf, can be reported under this Policy. This may be about something that:

- Is against the National Safeguarding Policies for England and Wales
- Falls below established standards of good practice

Safeguards

The Pilgrimage is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of, office holders and volunteers.

The Pilgrimage recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of repercussion from those responsible for the failure or malpractice.

The Pilgrimage will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any other procedures such as grievance, disciplinary etc. which may already affect you, but will be treated on its own merits.

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence. At the appropriate time, however, you may be approached to come forward as a witness, in order to bring the matter to a conclusion.

Anonymous Allegations

The Pilgrimage accepts that individuals will raise genuine concerns that are based on factual evidence or direct observation. With this in mind you are encouraged to put your name to the allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful and far more difficult to investigate and prove. They will however be considered at the discretion of the Pilgrimage.

Untrue or Malicious Allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, action may be taken against you.

Procedure

How to Raise a Concern

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with the Pilgrimage Safeguarding Lead:

Mark Taylor
1 Prospect Hill,
Whitby,
North Yorkshire.
YO21 1QE
Email: pilgrimagedirector@rcdmidd.org.uk
Tel: 07776115160

If you are unhappy about contacting the Pilgrimage Safeguarding Lead, either due to the seriousness or sensitivity of the issue, or the identity of the individual who is suspected of malpractice, you should seek advice from Safeguarding office of the Diocese of Middlesbrough, which is independent of the Pilgrimage itself. The named contact is:

Jacqui Drysdale
50a The Avenue,
Linthorpe
Middlesbrough,
TS5 6QT
email: safeguarding@rcdmidd.org.uk.
Tel: 01642 850505

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing. They are better raised in writing, setting out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates, places, the reason you are particularly concerned about the situation and any other supportive evidence you might have. In the event that other people share this concern, then each individual should submit their concerns in writing separately in their own words, and not as one report. The earlier you express the concern the easier it is to take investigate the allegation.

Although you are not expected to prove beyond any doubt the truth of an allegation, you will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for your concern.

Advice and guidance on how to pursue matters of concern can be obtained from Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service ("CSAS") either by direct contact or via the CSAS website (www.csas.uk.net).

How the Pilgrimage will Respond

The action taken by the Pilgrimage will depend upon the nature of your concerns. Remember that testing out your concerns is not the same as either accepting or rejecting them. The matters raised may be subject to:

- Internal investigation.
- Referral to the statutory authorities (Police or Social Care Services).
- Consideration under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- Consideration under Canon Law.
- Notification to insurers.

Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations that fall within the scope of our Child and Vulnerable Adult procedures will be referred for consideration under those procedures.

Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation. If urgent action is required this will be taken before any investigation is conducted.

If you are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings the Pilgrimage will arrange for you to receive advice about the procedure and any necessary support. In addition, they will take steps to minimise any difficulties that you may experience as a result of raising a concern.

The Pilgrimage accepts that you need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Thus, subject to legal constraints, they will inform you of the outcome of any investigation. Our policy is to ensure that all concerns are fully and satisfactorily investigated.

Further Contact Details

If you are not satisfied with the way your concern has been managed you should contact CSSA using the contact details listed below:

CSSA
Queensway House,
39 Eccleston Square, London
SW1V 1BX
email: admin@catholicsafeguarding.org.uk
Tel: 0207 901 1920