



# THE DIOCESE OF YORK

## Parish Safeguarding Representative Role Specification

The Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) is responsible for ensuring that the Diocesan policy in respect of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is implemented within the parish or benefice and its congregation. They are the link between the parish and the Safeguarding Team at the Diocese.

The PSR should be a lay person who has a special interest in the care and welfare of children and vulnerable adults and an ability to liaise with and advise those who work directly with them. The PSR should have an understanding of safeguarding issues through Diocesan safeguarding training. The PSR is supported by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, the local Archdeacon, and the Diocesan Youth Adviser.

The PSR should be responsible to the PCC and the parish incumbent, and these three units should work together to implement the Parish Safeguarding Policy, Procedures & Good Practice Guidelines. In some circumstances it may be necessary for the incumbent to be the PSR, but this is generally not desirable as the incumbent should be available in a supporting role when difficulties arise.

## Person Specification

### Essential:

- Person has a developed understanding of the issues relating to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults;
- Person has up-to-date safeguarding training (C0, C1 C2 and refresher every 3 years) delivered by the Diocese of York;
- Person has sound understanding of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and how it should be implemented within the parish context; and
- Person knows how to respond to risks, concerns and allegations and is able to communicate with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser when issues arise.

### Desirable:

- Person has great integrity, common sense, sensitivity and ability to act independently;
- Person is removed from/ not regularly engaged in work with children or vulnerable adults, to ensure that concerns about a vulnerable person, the behaviour of a person in a position of trust or allegations of abuse can be reported without a conflict of interest<sup>1</sup>; and
- Person has experience in social work, work with children or work with vulnerable adults.

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<sup>1</sup> Experience shows that if concerns are reported to a person closely associated with children's or youth work, a conflict of interest may arise, albeit subconsciously, between addressing the needs of the child and supporting the worker or workers involved.

# Responsibilities

It is the general responsibility of the PCC, the incumbent, and the PSR together to make sure everybody in the parish and congregation knows about the importance of safeguarding and who to talk to if there is a concern.

## Policy and Paperwork:

- To familiarise self with the Parish Safeguarding Policy and make sure it is reviewed and adopted by the PCC and sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor annually;
- To ensure that the Parish Safeguarding Policy is adhered to, and to raise any concerns in this respect with the incumbent and churchwardens, or the PCC or in the last resort with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser who will liaise with the Archdeacon as appropriate;
- To respond to information requests from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team including reports on safeguarding allegations and parish self-audits;
- To oversee (together with the PCC and incumbent) all confidential agreements/ safeguarding agreements put into place concerning any individual. Should a type A or type B risk assessment additionally be required, the PSR has a role in co-ordination and oversight/ management of the same in partnership with the DSA (Diocese) including involvement in any Core Group meeting or other risk management discussions;
- To retain all safeguarding paperwork securely and ensure its confidentiality, and ensure that relevant information is shared with the DSA; and
- To ensure that there is a Childline poster (available from NSPCC ), contact details for the PSR and the Parish Safeguarding Policy on a notice-board in every place where activities involving the vulnerable take place, including within the church.

## Safer Recruitment:

- To ensure safer recruitment policy is followed during hiring of new volunteers and workers including DBS checks and references for all youth and vulnerable adult helpers and leaders;
- To ensure all volunteers and workers have a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy, and know the contact details of those from whom child protection or safeguarding advice can be accessed; and
- To ensure all members of the church receive appropriate modular safeguarding training (including the PSRs themselves).

## Responding to Concerns/ Allegations:

- To receive any concerns as to the safety or well-being of children and vulnerable adults in relation to the church, or concerns raised by a church member in respect of any child or vulnerable adult known to them;
- To ensure that any person with a concern knows they can discuss their concern with the PSR, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or the Archdeacon if more appropriate;
- To ensure that any allegations of abuse by someone working for the parish (either paid or volunteer) are immediately brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Adviser for advice and support;
- To respond to concerns (as directed in the Safeguarding Policy) by discussing and agreeing an appropriate response with the person raising the concern. Depending on the nature of the concern this response may range from discussing the matter with the incumbent or churchwarden, to (in an emergency) immediately contacting the police or local social services department. It will in almost all circumstances involve contacting, at an early stage, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser who will liaise with the Archdeacon as appropriate;
- The PSR will NOT investigate the concern beyond asking the person raising the concern such questions as may be necessary to establish the facts on which the concern is based (e.g. what have you seen/heard/ that makes you concerned; what consequences are you worried about; who have you spoken to about your concerns etc.); and
- To keep an accurate note of any concerns received and of their response. If a disclosure of abuse has been made by a child or vulnerable adult, the PSR will record the person's exact words, or the words used by any person that has told them of their concerns.