



**Bishops' Conference of Scotland  
NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE PROTECTION OF  
CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. ANDREWS AND EDINBURGH**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

“The Catholic Church in Scotland is concerned with the lives, safety, wholeness and well-being of each individual person within God’s purpose for everyone.

It seeks to safeguard the welfare of people of all ages who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations.

As a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us, ordained, professed, paid and voluntary members, to work together to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults.”

**PROMOTING THE POLICY STATEMENT**

The Policy Statement must be brought to the attention of all existing and new workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults, and they should be informed of any guidance or compulsory training available to help them to implement the Policy Statement.

The Policy Statement should be clearly displayed in Parishes, Activities and Organisations. Doing so will give a clear message to the local community that the Church in Scotland cares deeply about all people.

Contact details of individuals with specific responsibility for safeguarding, e.g. Parish Co-ordinator, National Co-ordinator, will also be on the visible statement of care.



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**NATIONAL POLICIES**

The National Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NOPCVA) has produced a new manual '*Awareness and Safety in our Catholic Communities*' in collaboration with key personnel across the dioceses, to inform and support those individuals who have been tasked with the responsibility to minimise the risk of abuse; respond appropriately when children, young people or a vulnerable adult have been harmed or may be at risk of being harmed; and promote their welfare and well-being.

These policies and procedures are evidence of the enduring commitment of the Bishops in Scotland to develop and maintain high quality safeguarding practice for all those who are involved in the life of the Church. The importance of support, guidance, procedures and training and development opportunities for people working with children and those who are vulnerable is recognised and this document should be used to provide a comprehensive and unified approach to the safeguarding programme.



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### **THE ROLE OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN ADVISER**

The purpose of the Adviser is to assist the Cardinal with private and confidential advice and information in relation to case-specific circumstances.

The Adviser has a central role in providing support and also chairs the Archdiocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team meetings (and any subgroups thereof) in implementing policies in order to:

- *help develop effective protection policies and practice;*
- *support the Archdiocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team in informing and advising the Cardinal on good practice in managing all matters relating to allegations of abuse.*

### **THE ROLE OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland requires the establishment of a Diocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team in each Diocese.

An established Diocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team in each Diocese will ensure independent scrutiny to support and assist the Diocesan Adviser to oversee and manage the process around current issues.

The role is as follows:

#### **1. Accountability**

The Archdiocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team is accountable to the Cardinal.

#### **2. The Role of the Archdiocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team**

The Adviser and the Archdiocesan Risk Assessment and Management Team will work closely with the Cardinal, Vicar General and others in the management of individual cases and in the general implementation of child protection and vulnerable adult strategies and policies.



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The team has seven main functions, which are:

- *to agree clear and unambiguous arrangements with all personnel within the Archdiocese for liaison, consultation and working together regarding allegations;*
- *to ensure that the Cardinal/Leader receives full information relevant to child protection and vulnerable adult incidents together with recommendations;*
- *to receive all information relating to child protection and vulnerable adult matters from the Archdiocese. (For example, confidential reference can be made to the team regarding Disclosure Scotland information which would require a decision by the lead signatory.)*
- *to ensure effective liaison with the statutory agencies;*
- *to keep a record of all meetings, discussions and decisions taken and place them in a confidential child protection and/or vulnerable adult file;*
- *to support and advise on matters regarding long term arrangements for members of the Church (Clergy, Religious and Laity) who are known abusers of children;*
- *to address the issue of parishioners who pose a risk to children.*

### **THE ROLE OF THE PARISH PRIEST**

Every Parish Priest has a duty to be fully conversant with the Policies approved by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland. Together with the Parish Co-ordinator, the Parish Priest will have responsibility for ensuring good standards of practice.



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### **THE PARISH CO-ORDINATOR**

All Parishes are required to have a Parish Co-ordinator who has been appointed in accordance with the Church's selection and recruitment process. This must include a 'Disclosure Check'.

The main purpose of the post is to **support** the Parish Priest to ensure that all policies approved by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland are effectively and appropriately implemented in the Parish.

### **RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

To demonstrate that the work of volunteers with children is valued highly, the Catholic Church operates a robust recruitment procedure.

Every Parish Priest and Parish Co-ordinator has a copy '*Awareness and Safety in our Catholic Communities*' containing national policies and procedures.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON OR VULNERABLE ADULT**

If you see behaviour that is of concern, or if an individual tells you something, you need to take them seriously, and speak to someone (the person to whom you are responsible or the Diocesan Adviser).

In an emergency situation, where you have immediate concerns for the safety of an individual you must contact the Police/Social Work Services/Medical Services direct.