



Holy Family of Bordeaux

in Britain and Ireland

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. POLICY OVERVIEW

The Holy Family of Bordeaux is committed to safeguarding all children and adults. For the Holy Family of Bordeaux, this commitment directly relates to the fact that we are all made in the image of God and the Church's common belief in the preciousness, dignity and uniqueness of every human life. We start from the principle that each person has a right to expect the highest level of protection, love, encouragement and respect. Following the safeguarding reviews in 2020, we are committed to the One Church Approach to safeguarding by implementing the necessary changes and ensuring we respond promptly and compassionately to victims/survivors.

2. SCOPE

This policy and procedure apply to all Sisters and Staff members within the Holy Family of Bordeaux, regardless of their role or the activities they undertake.

It is the responsibility of all Holy Family of Bordeaux members to prevent, whether by action or omission, abuse. Abuse in this policy refers to: physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, neglect, self-neglect, organisational, material, psychological, financial, domestic, or verbal abuse. Additionally, behaviour which effectively results in modern-day slavery or where there is evidence of discrimination or radicalisation, needs to be recognised and addressed as a safeguarding issue, in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 6.

3. TRAINING

All Holy Family of Bordeaux members will undergo safeguarding training in relation to both Children and Adults as well as any other training relevant to their role. Listed below are the minimum standards for training in each role:

- Provincial / Superior / Leader – Advanced Safeguarding Training

- Safeguarding Lead – Safeguarding Lead Training
- Trustees – Trustee safeguarding training
- Community members who work with the public – Basic safeguarding training
- Community members who do not work with the public – Internal safeguarding training

The Holy Family of Bordeaux sisters and staff will undertake refresher training every two years.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Provincial and Trustees

The Provincial and Trustees have a duty to maintain appropriate governance and oversight of Safeguarding in line with this policy and national guidelines.

The Provincial and Trustees are responsible for ensuring appropriate policy, procedures, and best practices are in place for the effective delivery of safeguarding, including any related due diligence checks. Certain functions of the Provincial and Trustees will be delegated to members, as indicated below.

The Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead has direct oversight of the Holy Family of Bordeaux safeguarding policy and guidance, including management and oversight of documentation, case progression/management, the secure, legally compliant storage of safeguarding reports and related material, and oversight of the relationship with and input on the RLSS's work.

The Safeguarding Lead may delegate some of this responsibility to the RLSS by passing the case to them, but will remain the key contact for the duration of the case unless another individual is identified to assume responsibility.

All other roles

All members/staff have an obligation to ensure they know how to respond to safeguarding concerns by being familiar with the content of this policy, the procedure contained within it, and any associated policies/procedures.

Everyone involved in the work of the Holy Family of Bordeaux has a duty to disclose to the Safeguarding Lead or the Provincial any safeguarding concerns that have been raised about them.

5. PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Action must be taken if a concern is raised that a child or an adult is suffering, or is likely to suffer, from significant harm. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Someone who is at serious risk of harm from self or others
- Someone who poses a serious risk of harm to someone else
- A concern about a child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm from someone else
- Concerns over someone's mental capacity

Action must also be taken in line with the Church's mandatory reporting policy. This means that action must be taken if there are reasonable grounds to suspect or believe, that someone who holds any type of role within the Church is going to or has committed a crime, is going to or has caused harm, poses a risk or is otherwise unsuitable to work in a public facing role.

6. PROCEDURE

If a Holy Family Sister becomes aware of a safeguarding issue, they should contact the Safeguarding Lead and immediately pass the concern and all associated records to them. Ensure the person who made you aware of the issue knows you are doing this.

The Safeguarding Lead, who has casework responsibility, should:

- Ensure the victim/survivor or individual has been informed of the next steps
- Explain what will happen, give them options if possible and an indicative timescale
- Contact any relevant bodies
- Complete the safeguarding paperwork and ensure appropriate record keeping of all communications, including phone calls, meetings and discussions in relation to the case are recorded
- Inform the Provincial Leader of the new safeguarding referral.
- All referrals/reports outside of the RLSS should be made as soon as possible upon receiving the information, unless there are exceptional circumstances to postpone making this referral/report.
- The decision to delay a referral/report must be authorised by the Provincial or the Safeguarding Lead.

When the concern needs to be reported to a statutory agency, the individual making the referral must be informed that all information about safeguarding will not be kept confidential, and that the details must be passed on to the police and any other appropriate body, but they may be able to remain anonymous depending on the circumstances. All members should be supportive of the individual making the disclosure, but should not seek more details than necessary for an initial statutory referral.

The RLSS will make recommendations about when to report to safeguarding bodies or external agencies based on risk and need, and the national policy guidance supplied by the CSSA.

Safeguarding Bodies (not exhaustive)

- Internal Safeguarding Structures within the Catholic Church
- Local authority Safeguarding team – Adults
- Local authority Safeguarding team – Children
- Police 999
- Police 101
- GP
- Crisis Team
- RLSS Out of Hours Team
- Community Psychiatric Nurse
- Charity Commission
- CSSA
- Local Safeguarding Commission
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- NSPCC
- DBS

7. WHISTLEBLOWING

The Holy Family Sisters will encourage and enable anyone with a serious concern to raise the concern without fear of victimisation or disadvantage.

If that concern is in regard to malpractice, illegal acts, or omissions at the Holy Family of Bordeaux or other religious institutions relating to safeguarding, the RLSS should be made aware.

The action taken by the RLSS will depend upon the nature of the concern referred. However, if appropriate, an investigation will be undertaken, followed by appropriate action, and written feedback will be provided, including a rationale documenting the reasons for the identified actions. This can be delegated to RLSS.

8. RECORDING AND STORAGE OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND CASE FILES

Primary responsibility for the management of documents and safeguarding case files sits with the Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure an accurate, auditable, and secure record of any safeguarding concern or allegation referred to the Holy Family Sisters is maintained.

This record will include:

- Relevant contact details
- Details of how/when the concern or allegation was received.
- Details of the concern itself
- Relevant historical information
- Identified past and present risk factors
- Any actions or investigations undertaken, including those by the Holy Family of Bordeaux or RLSS, and from statutory agencies.
- Rationale for actions and or outcome of case

All records are potential evidence in a criminal trial, civil case, or statutory/public Inquiry and must be stored in a safe and retrievable format with an auditable record of provenance and integrity.

9. SAFER RECRUITMENT PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The Holy Family of Bordeaux will ensure that staff undergo the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (including enhanced DBS) in line with both statutory and Catholic Church requirements.

Appointments will be based on the person's experience, skills and ability to meet the set criteria and job specification for the specific role. It is essential to ensure that all documentation relating to the applicant is stored securely and remains confidential.

Appointment to a role will not be confirmed until a satisfactory DBS Disclosure check has been received and previous employment references have been confirmed as acceptable.

On appointment, all new employees should be provided with a copy of this document and asked to sign to confirm they understand all relevant policies and procedures, including a copy of this document and their responsibilities within it highlighted.

All persons seeking to work with children or adults, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, must be provided with the opportunity to self-disclose relevant conviction information. This is a DBS Code of Practice requirement and applies to anyone being asked to have an Enhanced Disclosure.

10. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is approved by the Holy Family Sisters Trustees of Britain and Ireland and will be subject to an initial review in January 2027, followed by reviews every three years or sooner if there is a significant change or need.

Name:

Date: