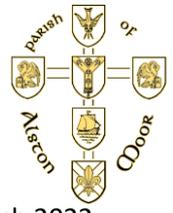


The Parish of Alston Moor

SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

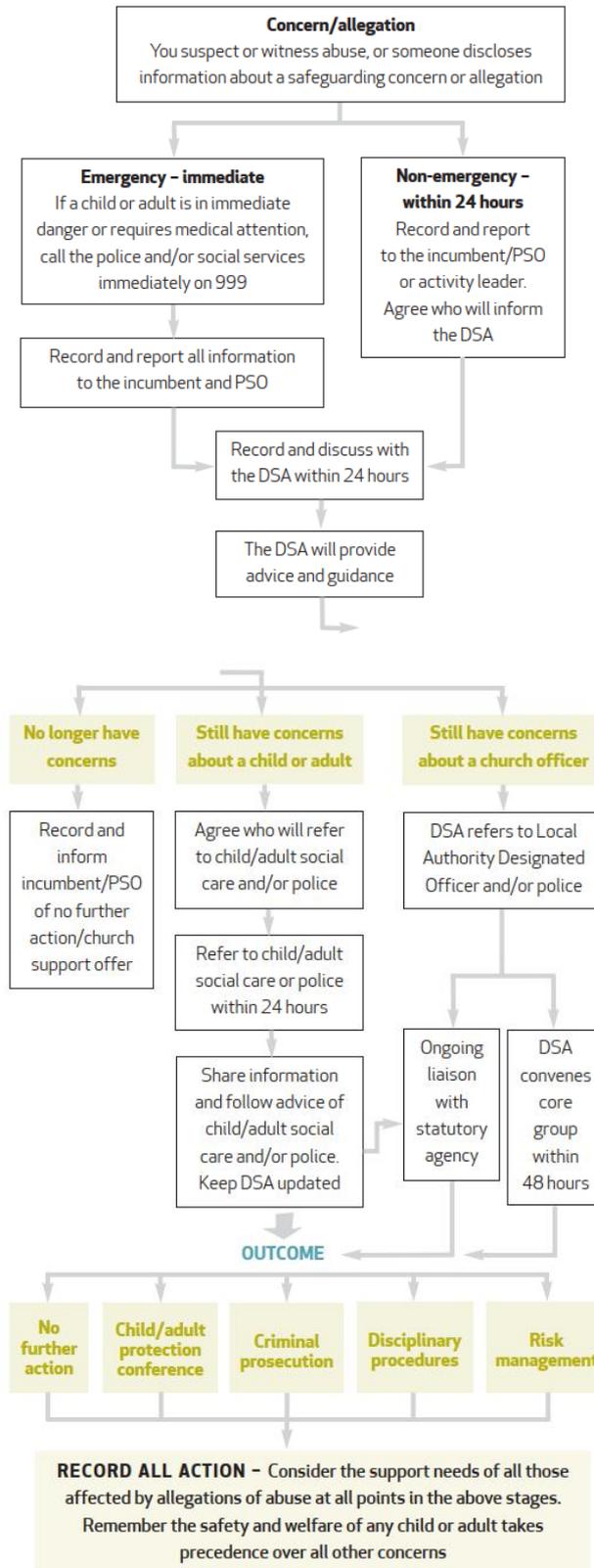
Responding to Concerns or Allegations



The following Procedure was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on 16th March 2022

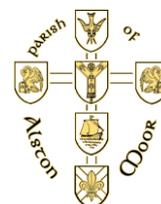
In the event of any safeguarding concern or allegation we will follow the procedure in Chapter 7 of the *Parish Safeguarding Handbook*, summarised in the flowcharts below (7.1) and detailed in 7.2 and 7.3.

7.1 Quick guide



Note:
PSO means
Parish Safeguarding Officer
DSA means
Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

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SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE
Responding to Concerns or Allegations



7.2 What to do if you are concerned about a child or adult and/or you are concerned that a church officer may be abusing a child or adult

If you have a concern that a child or adult is or may be being abused, or that a church officer is or may be abusing a child or adult (see sections 3 and 4 of the *Parish Safeguarding Handbook* for information on types of abuse):

1. Respond well to the victim/survivor, if it is a direct disclosure, to ensure they feel listened to and taken seriously. Explain what will happen next and check out support requirements. They should be informed that their identity and the identity of the respondent will be shared with key church officers, and may be shared with the statutory agencies, if there is any current risk to children or adults. The concern or allegation should not be shared with anyone other than those who need to know (e.g. the statutory agencies and appropriate church officers – see endnote 36 of the *Parish Safeguarding Handbook*) (see section 7.3).

2. **Emergency:** If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the emergency services on 999.

3. **Non-emergency:** Contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer or incumbent, in the first instance. They must then contact the DSA. If neither are available, contact the DSA directly. If the concern arises in an activity, discuss with the group/activity leader, who will contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer or incumbent.

4. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSA within 24 hours.

5. If the PSO/incumbent or the DSA are not available within 24 hours, contact Children's Social Care or Adult Social Care and/or the police directly, if the concern is that a child or adult is being abused. Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or police if the concern is that a church officer may be abusing a child or adult.

Advise the Parish Safeguarding Officer or incumbent as soon as possible that you have made a referral; they will advise the DSA.

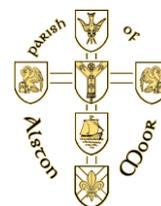
If in doubt don't delay – seek advice from statutory agencies.

6. Do not contact the respondent or anyone who may be implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure, until advice has been sought from the DSA or statutory agencies.

7. Record the details of the concern or allegation. Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time (usually it will not be), make a written record as soon as possible afterwards or before the end of the day. Record the time, date, location, persons present and how the concern or allegation was received, e.g. by telephone, face-to-face conversation, letter, etc. The record should include details of information provided to that person as well as the information received. Always sign and date the record. Keep it factual. Pass on a copy to the DSA (and/or the PSO/incumbent).

The records should be kept secure and confidential (please see Model Parish Recording Template).

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7.3 Guidelines for responding to a person disclosing abuse

Respond

Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/ Parish Safeguarding Officer/ DSA and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the DSA or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place and actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Report

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police.
- Otherwise report to your activity leader/Parish Safeguarding Officer/incumbent immediately.
- Within 24 hours the PSO/incumbent reports the concerns to the DSA.
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care or the police.

Date: