

When a safeguarding concern or allegation relating to a church officer¹ is received²

If there is immediate danger or anyone requires medical attention call the Emergency Services - 999

Report to Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser (BSA) immediately (within 24 hours of receiving the concern)

Do not delay referring to child or adult social care services where necessary if BSA cannot be contacted immediately

The concern or allegation will be managed by the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser. The parish role is to follow the advice of statutory agencies and the diocesan core group. Below is an outline of the procedure that may be followed.

Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser conducts an internal investigation and / or informs statutory agencies (if this has not already been actioned by the local church), as appropriate

Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser convenes a diocesan core group within 48 hours to consider:

- informing the respondent (church officer against whom the concern or allegation has been made)
- · suspending the respondent
- risk
- pastoral support for victim, respondent, their families, local church
- communications strategy
- · interim safeguarding agreement

Diocesan core group meets as required during the investigation and then, at its conclusion, to consider, as appropriate:

- investigation summary report
- initiation of a formal risk assessment
- initiation of disciplinary proceedings
- · ongoing risk
- ongoing safeguarding agreement
- communications strategy
- ongoing pastoral support

During this time the victim is kept informed by a support person and the respondent by a link person appointed by the Bishop Once all investigations and procedures are complete, final outcomes will vary depending on the nature of the concern or allegation and the level of risk involved.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- respondent returns to their paid or voluntary role
- respondent is dismissed from their paid or voluntary role
- referral of the respondent to the Disclosure & Barring Service for barring
- respondent is allowed to attend a church subject to a safeguarding agreement
- an apology and/or compensation is given to the victim
- a case or lessons learned review is undertaken

¹ A church officer is anyone appointed or elected to a role on behalf of the church, whether lay or ordained, paid or unpaid

² Full details of how the Church responds to safeguarding concerns are outline in The Church of England's Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers available at www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding